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The Shape of Things

WHAT A NAZI-DOMINATED EUROPE WOULD look like is being demonstrated in Czechoslovakia. Czech students who dislike the Nazi regime are being dealt with in a way hitherto reserved for colonial peoples carrying the white man's burden. Unrest seems to have been on the increase since October 28, Czech "Independence Day." When an arrested student died in prison, other students at the University of Prague demonstrated, and nine were taken to an airport on the outskirts of the city and shot. According to a Prague dispatch, students were taken to the scene in buses to witness the salutary spectacle. Shortly after the student executions three more Czechs, two of them policemen, were put to death "because of acts of violence against a German," that is, against the new master race of Central Europe. More than 1,000 students were arrested, and the university, one of the oldest in Europe, was closed. Ten thousand S. S. men were sent in to patrol the "protectorate," and martial law was declared. In view of reports of unrest within the Reich (Beach Conger of the New York *Herald Tribune* has been expelled for cabling these reports abroad), the suppression of all news of the Czech disorders in the German press is significant. "It is quite possible," according to official German sources, "that similar occurrences may take place in the occupied parts of Poland."

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THE BATISTA DICTATORSHIP SEEMS TO BE IN process of "withering away" in Cuba, though it is too early to be certain that the Colonel will accept the results of the elections for the Constituent Assembly. Political parties opposing the present administration elected forty-one delegates to the Assembly, as against only thirty-five for the government parties. Unfortunately the deep divisions existing on both sides of the fence may permit Batista to divide and rule. Against the government are parties as sharply different in their outlook as Grau San Martín's Cuban Revolutionaries, which emerged as Cuba's biggest party, and Menocal's not too democratic Democratic Republicans. On the other side, supporting the government, are the not at all liberal Liberals, Machado's old party, and the Communists. The results of the election, and the fact that they were held at all, are the most hopeful events in Cuba since American pressure—despite the Good Neighbor policy—forced the democratic and representative Grau out of office in 1934. Batista's attitude toward the Assembly will be the test of his recent avowals of democratic intentions.

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PIERCE BUTLER HAD NEITHER VISION NOR learning nor eloquence, and the tributes paid to the late Supreme Court Justice were nauseating because they were untrue. He was born in a log cabin and came of the common people, but he made his way by serving those who exploit them. Like Frank B. Kellogg, a fellow-Minnesotan, he rose in his profession by representing the railroad corporations which have played so dominant a part in the politics of that state. He was primarily a railroad lawyer. He went on the bench as a railroad lawyer. His reading of the Constitution harked back to no "rugged individualist" frontier, for he was as ready to approve government interference with basic liberties as he was to block any interference in defense of worker, investor, or consumer. We cite Butler's dissent in the Hague case. A "rugged individualist" would never have given a mere mayor or police chief such wide powers over the rights of free speech and assembly. Butler was a Catholic, and might have derived from his religion some sympathy with minorities; the rhetoric he employed in defense of corporations should consistently have applied to basic personal liberties as well. His dissent in the Scottsboro case—in which his fellow-conservative, Justice Sutherland, spoke for the majority—showed how little there was of the milk of human sympathy in Pierce Butler.

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FOUR GENERAL MOTORS COMPANIES HAVE been found guilty of a conspiracy to restrict interstate commerce, while seventeen officials of the companies have been found not guilty in a curious verdict just handed down in South Bend, Indiana. In many respects the verdict was no more curious than the case itself. The General Motors companies were charged with having coerced dealers to finance their sales through the General Motors Acceptance Corporation, a subsidiary. It was not charged that the consumers lost by the arrangement. As a matter of fact, the General Motors Acceptance Corporation gives better terms and is run on a more enlightened

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plane than many of the independent finance companies. Nor is it charged that the practice of the company was detrimental to the dealers or injurious to competing automobile companies. Most of the dealers preferred the arrangement, and the other large automobile companies had adopted the same policy. But the fact remains that the four companies did commit a technical violation of the anti-trust laws. Strictly interpreted, these laws proscribe many normal activities of modern large-scale industry. Whether the practices or the laws should be changed is a question in the sphere of economic and political philosophy. It is hardly surprising that the jury should have tried to preserve a little of both.

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SENATOR WAGNER HAS BLAZED MORE NEW trails in American legislation than any other member of Congress, but he never entered a tougher battle than that he started with his bill to let the government sell annuities up to $100 a month. Those supporting the bill claim that the government could sell annuities at 30 per cent less than the private companies, and judging from the government's experience with war-risk insurance we believe the claim justified. The private companies are run as expensively and as bureaucratically as ever they were in the days of the Hughes investigation—and maybe as corruptly. It would be a blessing to have the government enter this field, and it would certainly encourage the thrift our conservatives always fear to undermine by social security. But the power of the insurance companies in politics and in the press is enormous, and Senator Wagner's chances of success are none too good. Like the bankers, the insurance companies fear the yardstick of government competition, for it would show them up as completely as it has the utilities. In that connection it is interesting to note that Chairman Steagall of the House Banking Committee has enlisted in the bankers' old campaign to abolish postal savings—our one form of government banking for the poor, as the RFC is government banking for the rich.

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THANKS TO A PRODUCTION RATE OF OVER 90 per cent of capacity, the steel industry has been able to reduce unit costs, despite a rise in raw-material prices, and is expected to show brilliant profits for the current quarter. In the past such conditions have usually led to an attempt to push earnings still higher by jacking up prices, and a number of steel leaders openly favor similar tactics today. Nevertheless, it is now generally believed that basic quotations for the first quarter of 1940 will not show any increase, and while this is no doubt a painful thought to Mr. Weir, we fancy it is likely to prove a constructive step not only for the economy as a whole but for the steel industry itself. As we have stated before, the quickest way to cut short the present recovery would be to raise industrial prices, and it is certain that a move by steel in this direction would be highly infectious. Since the beginning of the war the Administration has used all its influence to win support for this view. The Temporary National Economic Committee has provided it with a most effective instrument for this purpose, as the chief organ of the steel industry, *Iron Age,* acknowledged recently by saying: "The atmosphere created by the statements of government spokesmen at the opening of steel hearings by the TNEC in Washington is not propitious for the advancing of steel prices for the first quarter. It is becoming increasingly clear that government pressure by suasion and not by ukase will seek to prevent inflationary tendencies in prices, inventories, and wages in an effort to soften the shock of transition to normal conditions whenever peace shall arrive." This accomplishment alone more than justifies the creation of the TNEC and suggests that a permanent body similarly equipped to throw the light of publicity on industrial policies would be a valuable institution.

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AN ATMOSPHERE OF PRONOUNCED GLOOM envelops authorities of the New York Stock Exchange because of a public-opinion survey now being conducted by and about the Exchange. Apparently it was hoped that the results would provide public pressure for a relaxation of government regulation, but preliminary returns are not encouraging. Three-fourths of the men in the street buttonholed by questioners seem to know nothing about the Exchange and to care less, though the idea of regulation is popular. A note of melancholy runs through the reports on the survey in the financial pages: "A few think that there is too much government regulation, but such a few that they are entirely negligible. . . . The disclosures have come as a distinct surprise to many brokers, particularly the disclosure that most persons have little interest in the welfare of the business." The one straw at which the Exchange can clutch is a thin one: "The only consolation is an indication that the people who want to abolish the Exchange are generally those who think it deals in livestock. . . ." Is it so surprising that the sheep feel no affection for the shears?

✶

BACK IN THE PACIFIC DAYS OF 1925 LORD Rothermere, idling in Monte Carlo, sighed over his apéritif and remarked wearily to the Princess Stefanie Hohenlohe-Waldenburg that there was very little news in his London *Daily Mail.* He would be grateful, he told her, "for any original ideas." The remark was fateful. Stefanie Hohenlohe-Waldenburg, then pretty much on the loose, had lots of original ideas, and before Rothermere knew it he was all tied up in a contract making her his "special political representative in Europe" at £5,000 a year. If there was no news, they would make news—

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and not only news but kings as well. They would work, Stefanie now relates, "for the restoration of the Hohenzollern and Hapsburg dynasties," with Rothermere slated to be a "modern Warwick the kingmaker . . . on the European rather than the English field." They got off to a good start, but trouble lay ahead. Rothermere soon soured on the Hapsburg dynasty and decided to push his son Esmond toward the Magyar throne. Then Stefanie Hohenlohe-Waldenburg began to make a financial nuisance of herself, and made matters worse by sending Rothermere elaborate gifts to soothe him—along with the bills to cover them. "There was no opportunity of 'giving' her money," he complains, "because she was always asking for it." So, despite her spade work in selling him to the Nazis and winning for him a royal reception by Adolf Hitler, he finally called quits and terminated the connection. At least he thought he terminated the connection. Stefanie insisted hers was a lifetime appointment, and brought the good gray kingmaker into court for breach of contract. What was to have been an epic of the front page fizzled out in a judgment for Rothermere. Now the great scoop is gone glimmering, the Nazi tie is dissolved, Esmond wears no crown, and Stefanie is a sad memory.

*

LUIS QUINTANILLA, SOLDIER OF SPAIN'S Republic, came away from the war last January to paint frescoes for what was to be the Spanish building at the World's Fair. The war ended, and there was no Spanish building, but the frescoes are now on exhibition at the American Artists' Galleries. So is all the rest of Quintanilla's work that escaped destruction. The whole artistic expression of a socially conscious artist hangs here in these portraits of his fellow-prisoners made in jail after the Asturias revolt of 1934, in the drawings—at once so delicate and so strong, so ruthlessly real and so instinct with compassion—which put the Spanish war on paper. And in the quiet beauty of the frescoes the Spanish Republic lies dead. If these were all, the achievement would be notable, but Quintanilla has gone on living. His frescoes are his farewell to Spain. His paintings and his pastels show how an artist of courage and spirit can pick up life again after his work, his country, and the faith for which he fought have been destroyed. "I arrived here sad and demoralized," he said in a letter to Ernest Hemingway which forms the preface to his catalogue. "I didn't know whether I should commit suicide or get married, which is to prolong life; I married. I didn't know whether to take to alcohol or to work, and I worked. Little by little I took from my palette the bitter memories of Spain, and by dint of brush strokes I came to feel myself an individual again, and to love colors as old friends who for a long time have been forgotten." It is an exile's confession of faith.

Can Hitler Sit It Out?

GERMANY has now proclaimed as its chief war aim "the destruction of the British Empire," but it still seems uncertain how to set about this fairly formidable task. Almost daily Goebbels's loud-speakers emit blood-curdling threats about the terrible things that will shortly happen to warmongering England, but the thunderbolts remain in cold storage. Neither on land or in the air have the expected German attacks developed; only by sea is there an attempt at counter-offensive. These Fabian tactics may, of course, be abandoned at short notice, but present indications suggest that the Nazis are settling down to a war of nerves, of propaganda, and above all of economics. If this is their decision, it must surely represent the least unattractive of several unpleasant alternatives, for it means fighting Britain on Britain's chosen ground. Mr. Villard reports from Berlin on page 381 that the Germans have persuaded themselves of their immunity to blockade and wishfully believe that Britain's economy can be more easily undermined than their own.

In their fight against the blockade the Nazis have had their spectacular successes and will no doubt have more. But although the sinking of a battleship or a merchant vessel may make the headlines, it does little to offset the creeping paralysis imposed on Germany by the British blockade. Moreover, Winston Churchill's claims that the U-boat menace is being kept in check seems well founded, and no doubt means will be found to counter the new tactic of indiscriminate mine sowing. Up to date the British have lost 258,894 tons of shipping, or about 25,000 tons a week. But during the first half of 1917 they were losing on the average 146,000 tons weekly. At that time Britain really was in danger, but its losses in the past ten weeks have hardly amounted to more than the new tonnage which its shipyards could turn out in the same period.

Blockade and counter-blockade are only one aspect of economic warfare. Of equal importance are the efforts of both belligerents to win or force favors from neutral countries. Germany appears to be trying to impose something like Napoleon's continental system on its small neighbors. With its control of the Baltic it is trying to cut off the important supplies of food and raw materials which Britain normally receives from the Scandinavian countries. It has sunk or captured a number of Finnish and Swedish ships and is attempting to force all Baltic trade through the Kiel Canal route. But quite apart from Scandinavian unwillingness to abandon good Western customers to further a Nazi victory, Germany must be thwarted by economic facts. It is in no position to supply these neutral states with all the goods they import; but they cannot buy from the West unless they can also sell,

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and cut off from all outside sources of raw materials, they would be unable to produce the kinds of goods Germany wishes to obtain from them.

While Germany controls the exit from the Baltic, Britain commands its entrance and can use this to make all ingoing ships submit to contraband inspection. Its immediate object, of course, is to prevent the neutral states from transshipping goods to the enemy, and it makes a careful check to insure that imports of any commodity do not exceed peace-time norms. This method naturally causes some friction, but most neutral ships find it worth while to report at the British control stations. Such subservience to the enemy is infuriating to Berlin, which has protested that it is unneutral conduct and has even hinted to some states that its continuance might be regarded as a hostile act. Unless Germany, however, is prepared to take the risks of invading these small states, it seems unlikely that much can be done to mobilize them against the British blockade. They all need oceanic trade, and so long as Britain rules the waves they cannot afford to accept German tutelage.

The position of the neutrals of Southeastern Europe is rather different. In this region Germany has for some years enjoyed the same commanding economic position that Britain has in Northwestern Europe, and there is no sea barrier to be surmounted. However, some difficulty is evidently being encountered in obtaining a smooth flow northward of the oil, metals, and foodstuffs which these countries have available. One obstacle is that the Reich owes most of these countries large sums for goods previously supplied, and they wish to see these debts paid before they part with more. Their attitude in this regard is being stiffened by offers coming in from Britain and France to buy with real money. The only way Germany can pay is with goods, and the goods the Balkan states want are industrial products requiring just those raw materials which Germany cannot spare.

And here we come upon one of the two bottlenecks in which the Nazis are likely to get caught in waging a war of attrition. In respect of food they may get by without famine if not without serious malnutrition. But lack of raw materials seems likely to defeat them unless Russia comes to the rescue—a factor which is being pessimistically viewed by German military economic experts. The other economic bottleneck is transport. In their frantic efforts to build up their military machine the Nazis neglected their railroads, and now they are suffering from a severe shortage of rolling stock. Reports from Belgrade and Bucharest frequently refer to shipments held up for lack of cars, and the same deficiency may well prove a major obstacle in obtaining such Russian supplies as are available. Transport and raw materials are the key to economic warfare, and weakness in both must render German hopes of outstaying the Allies very tenuous.

Mercy and Statesmanship

THIRTY-TWO nations took part in the discussions held at Evian a year and a half ago on a long-range solution of the refugee problem. But only one of them—and that one of the smallest of them—is actually prepared to accept "non-Aryan" colonists. That country is Santo Domingo. While the British government, with all the vast spaces of the empire to choose from, could speak only of a possible trial settlement of 500 persons in the unmapped and almost inaccessible uplands of Guiana, tiny Santo Domingo has offered to take 100,000, and has offered to take them not out of pity but in recognition of the contribution that skilled and trained refugees from the Third Reich may make to the upbuilding of the Caribbean republic. That refugees from one dictatorship should find refuge under another is ironical, but an irony not unfamiliar in history, and men and women seeking a new home would not be squeamish. When it is recalled that our own country's contribution to Evian was a very modest one—a promise merely to take the full legal quota of German immigrants—we cannot afford to adopt a lofty attitude toward Trujillo's generous offer.

Until now the only criticism one can make is not of the Dominican government but of the tardiness with which Jewish organizations took up its offer. Trujillo first proposed to take German refugee colonists at Evian, when representatives of the great powers were still playing with the idea of a modified plan to "ransom" German Jewry. One of those who early recognized the importance and possibilities of the Dominican proposal was Arthur M. Lamport, who has the unusual distinction of being both an investment banker and a New Dealer. The project is now in competent and experienced hands—those of James N. Rosenberg and Dr. Joseph A. Rosen of Agro-Joint (American-Jewish Joint Agricultural Corporation). Their success in colonizing 300,000 Russian Jews on the land after the Bolshevik Revolution promises well for the new enterprise, which will be non-sectarian.

Agro-Joint began its work in Russia in 1923 with but twenty-three families, and both Rosenberg and Rosen expect also to go slowly with the present project. The Dominican government has promised to take 100,000, to waive the $500 entry fee, and to admit the refugees to full citizenship after two years' residence. But if the settlement is to become permanent and play its part in the upbuilding of Dominican life, it must be well planned. The colonists are required by the terms of the offer to engage in agriculture and related pursuits, and a great deal will depend on a careful choice of applicants. The subtropical climate makes colonization practicable. The project will test the enterprise of American Jewish organizations—on which the burden will fall—and the Dominican government's sincerity and willingness to cooperate. In spite of many doubts we hope for the

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project's success. We recall the benefits that Flemish weavers fleeing similar religious persecution brought to the industrial development of another island nation—England. Santo Domingo's act of mercy can also become an act of statesmanship.

Why Appease Japan?

REPORTS from the Far East during the past week portend ominous changes in that part of the world. Normally mysterious to the Occidental, political developments in Asia have been more than usually obscure since the signing of the Soviet-German non-aggression pact last August. As a result, American Far Eastern policy is subject to daily reappraisal in the light of the latest news. The most disquieting of the recent reports are the stories of alleged dissension among the Chinese forces. Skirmishes are said to have been fought on several occasions between troops of the former Red Army and Chinese regulars. There have also been stories of the suppression of the *Hsin Hua Jih Pao,* the Communist paper at Chungking. Why these stories should be circulated at this time is not clear since the events occurred nearly a half-year ago, and have been known here for at least three months.

If, as is alleged in Japanese reports, there is imminent danger of a civil war between Chiang and the Communist armies, the time would seem auspicious for the launching of the often-postponed puppet government under Wang Ching-wei. Actually, we are now told, the setting up of the new government has been indefinitely delayed. Wang is said to have demanded a measure of independence for the new regime which Japan was unwilling to grant. His hesitancy is not difficult to understand in view of the severe defeats suffered by the Japanese recently at Changsha and Honan.

The occupation of Pakhoi is perhaps more significant as a clue to the evolution of Japanese foreign policy. As yet there is little to suggest that Japan has found its way through the perplexities caused by the Soviet-German pact and the European war. There can be little doubt that the Japanese factions disagree seriously as to the best course to follow. The civilian and moderate military groups are apparently holding out for an agreement with Great Britain, France, and the United States, on the ground that these are likely to be the dominant powers in the Pacific after the war. But the extremists, as represented by the Kwantung army, having reversed their earlier policies, are now believed to favor an agreement with the Soviet Union. Such an understanding, they argue, would free Japan's hands for an attack on British, French, and Dutch possessions in the Pacific while the Allies' hands are tied. The occupation of Pakhoi might be a step in this direction. In any case the rebuff given to Britain at Tientsin after the evacuation of British troops from North China suggests that the army at least holds veto power against any effort to make terms with the Western powers.

The position of the United States has been made both difficult and important by these developments. All factions of the Japanese seem desirous of making terms with this country, provided we recognize the "new realities" in Eastern Asia. In other words, they are willing to enter into some sort of arrangement regarding American rights and interests in China on condition that we do not interfere with Japan's plans for consolidating its conquests and that we conclude a new trade agreement guaranteeing a continuance of American economic assistance. There is known to be a group within the State Department which favors acceptance of these terms. Continued opposition to Japan, it is argued, will only throw Japan into the arms of the Soviet Union and eliminate the United States altogether from China.

Such an agreement is not, of course, out of the question. But if it comes it will not be because the United States and Britain have taken a firm attitude toward Japan. The Soviets have a heavy stake in a Chinese victory. They have advanced millions of dollars' worth of supplies on credit. Within the past few days negotiations have been going on looking toward a further increase of Soviet aid to China. Moscow is not likely to abandon all that it has built up unless it is confronted with a possible Allied-Japanese-American combination which menaces its security. Only such a threat would be likely to produce a Japanese-Soviet agreement which would be fatal to China. The United States can avert this danger by pursuing its traditional Far Eastern policy of standing squarely for the territorial integrity of China. A policy of appeasement toward Japan at this late date is both unnecessary and dangerous.

New Deal Diplomat

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

FRANKNESS in diplomacy is looked upon as a high explosive to be used deliberately, for political purposes only, as in the case of the recent plain-speaking by Ambassador Grew in Tokyo. Since this is true, an unpremeditated, innocent expression of opinion by a diplomat is immediately construed to imply more than its apparent meaning.

As closely as possible, at a distance of six thousand miles and in the almost complete absence of news, I have been following the activities and words of our new Ambassador to Chile, Claude Bowers. By nature Mr. Bowers is no diplomat. He is a lot of other things, such as historian and newspaperman and Jeffersonian, old-style. He is plain-spoken, sharp-witted, and, I should think, completely irreverent. His magnificent work as

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Ambassador to Spain was largely obscured by the diplomatic shadows that blanketed the most shameless international swindle of our day. At present Mr. Bowers is serving his country and the Good Neighbor policy in Chile. It is an excellent post for a Democrat who is also a democrat.

Now if Mr. Bowers is not a diplomat by nature, he is by experience, and he touches off no explosives irresponsibly. Somehow he manages to be frank without causing alarm. At the pan-American housing conference held last month in Buenos Aires Mr. Bowers was chosen to speak in behalf of all the republics at the opening meeting. He made a speech that should have started revolutions in half a dozen countries but was, instead, received with unanimous approval and reported in the press of the whole continent. The stories from Buenos Aires reveal an interesting fight that was waged throughout the conference between the advocates of individual and those of collective housing. Gradually it became clear that the attitude of the delegates from the more reactionary countries was dictated not by economic or social considerations but by fear of putting large numbers of workers under one roof where they can discuss their grievances. Perhaps they remembered the shattered Socialist strongholds in Vienna. In any case the resolution supporting individual housing won, but it was coupled with a statement, proposed by the delegates of Chile, Mexico, Colombia, Panama, Cuba, and Claude Bowers, declaring that one solution of the housing problem is to pay a decent living wage! In view of the state of both housing and wages in all of Latin America, such a declaration by government representatives was an amazing event, and the role of the United States delegate was one in which we can take pride.

The English paper in Santiago, *South Pacific Mail,* reports verbatim another important talk by Mr. Bowers before a recent banquet given by the Chile-American Association. This speech cushioned its frankness with a generous padding of diplomatic politeness, but some of the passages were outspoken enough to win columns of space in all the papers next day. Mr. Bowers recalled the time, "not even yet remote, when we were suspected of sinister designs toward our neighbors in South America." He believed, he said, that our imperialistic threats were even then more rhetoric than reality, but they were an irritating exhibition of adolescence just the same. He went on to say that while the basis of the Good Neighbor policy is a mutual recognition of and respect for "each other's sovereignty, national dignity, and vital national interests," it also implies that "we must help one another over our various economic and financial difficulties to the full extent of our ability, and there is not one of us that will not stand at times in need of a helping hand." He called attention to the coming negotiations for a commercial treaty between Chile and the United States, adding: "There may be a few men left who still believe that our own land can prosper by living largely unto itself. These are blissfully oblivious to the fact that modern invention has wiped out distance and made all nations neighbors; that we cannot sell and refuse to buy; that unless we buy we cannot sell; and unless we sell we cannot prosper."

These words sound mild enough in the columns of *The Nation;* but their effect in Chile may be gauged by the fact that *La Hora* commented upon Mr. Bowers's frankness in discussing past suspicions of the United States "spontaneously rather than in diplomatic euphemisms."

Claude Bowers represents the best of the New Deal expressed in terms of diplomacy. We need more like him—men who can be ambassadors and human beings at the same time. But such men are seldom to be found among campaign contributors, and unfortunately they are scarce in the lower ranks of the foreign service. They can be found, but they have to be looked for.

CONTENTS

THE SHAPE OF THINGS 565

EDITORIALS:

CAN HITLER SIT IT OUT? 567

MERCY AND STATESMANSHIP 568

WHY APPEASE JAPAN? 569

NEW DEAL DIPLOMAT by Freda Kirchwey 569

LEWIS AND THE THIRD TERM by Richard L. Neuberger 571

INDIA'S WAR WITHIN A WAR by Krishnalal Shridharani 573

WRITERS IN THE WILDERNESS: I. JOHN STEINBECK by Margaret Marshall 576

EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS: AIRCRAFT PREFERRED by Keith Hutchison 579

IN THE WIND 580

ISSUES AND MEN: GERMANY HAS POWER by Oswald Garrison Villard 581

BOOKS AND THE ARTS:

WHOA TO YOU, PROFESSOR by I. F. Stone 583

JACK LONDON by Roberts Tapley 583

ANATOMY OF DIPLOMACY by Rustem Vambery 584

TRILOGY OF TRILOGIES by James Orrick 584

RECENT FICTION by Louis B. Salomon 585

DRAMA: CLASS DAY by Joseph Wood Krutch 586

FILMS by Franz Hoellering 587

MUSIC by B. H. Haggin 587

A SELECTED LIST OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS by Lena Barksdale 588

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Lewis and the Third Term

BY RICHARD L. NEUBERGER

Portland, Oregon, November 11

THE Far Western progressive conference that was to have indorsed President Roosevelt for a third term seems to be over before it started. John L. Lewis administered the *coup de grâce* when he instructed Labor's Nonpartisan League to boycott the event. Sponsors of the conference may try to resuscitate it, but it will be an insubstantial affair without the support of the C. I. O. unions, which constituted the principal mass base of the undertaking.

Although the New Deal appears to be the immediate victim of Lewis's action, the opinion is prevalent here that this occurred by chance rather than intent. In politics as in war neutral territory may be invaded in order to strike at the main objective, and that is what Lewis is believed to have done. The blow that finished the progressive conference was really aimed at a faction which the C. I. O. leader has lately come to regard as a liability to his organization, particularly on the Coast—the Communists and those who follow the Communist Party line.

The Pacific slope is more than 5,000 miles from Moscow, but this distance has not cushioned the Communists along the seaboard against the reverberations of the Nazi-Soviet pact. Ever since Ribbentrop went to the Russian capital, the Communists and their allies in the labor movement in the West have lost influence and prestige. Harry Bridges has been demoted, a fact which has caused ill-concealed Communist displeasure with Mr. Lewis. Harold Pritchett of the lumberjacks barely maintained leadership of his union at its annual convention. The tie between the Communists and the New Deal is becoming increasingly tenuous.

The man who conceived and promoted the now defunct progressive conference was Howard Costigan, youthful secretary of the Washington Commonwealth Federation. He had contact with the White House and with leading figures in the Roosevelt Administration through his friendship with John Boettiger, the President's son-in-law, now resident publisher of Hearst's Seattle *Post-Intelligencer*. Costigan also received the constant aid of Norman N. Littell, a friend of Boettiger's in Seattle who was recently appointed Assistant Attorney General of the United States. Littell, an able lawyer, is inclined to be arrogant, and he and Costigan antagonized important elements in Labor's Nonpartisan League by not consulting them as plans for the conference proceeded. Lewis, indignant that the backing of the C. I. O. should be taken for granted, has suggested that Littell may have violated the Hatch law by his activities in behalf of the affair.

But Lewis's anger over this matter was merely a by-product of his determination to shake the Communists and their sympathizers from positions of dominance in the labor movement and its political affiliates. Costigan wanted the progressive conference to expand into a permanent, pro-third-term organization which would include the liberals in all eleven Far Western states—California, Oregon, Washington, Nevada, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico. Obviously this would have been a force of national significance. Costigan frankly hoped to be the executive secretary, a possibility distinctly distasteful to Lewis and the leaders of Labor's Nonpartisan League. Their attitude stemmed from the fact that Costigan has zealously adhered to the Communist Party line. In September he favored "every method short of war which will aid those who oppose the ruthless military aggression of the Reich." Today the Washington Commonwealth Federation organ considers American neutrality jeopardized when the rector of the President's church prays for a British victory. Not many weeks ago Costigan wanted the arms embargo repealed to "immediately strengthen England and France." Now he is counseling against taking sides in any phase of the European conflict.

Because of its hostility to Costigan and its fear of Communist influence Labor's Nonpartisan League has refused to make the Washington Commonwealth Federation its headquarters in Seattle. Its refusal is emphasized by the fact that in the neighboring state across the Columbia River the League operates through the Oregon Commonwealth Federation, which has as secretary a twenty-nine-year-old Socialist named Monroe Sweetland who has opposed and resisted the Communists. Between Sweetland and Costigan no friendliness is wasted; the epithets of "Trotskyite" and "fellow-traveler" have been frequently exchanged.

Among many C. I. O. unions on the Coast there is resentment over the resources, time, and energy expended in recent years in combating attempts to deport Bridges and his friend Harold Pritchett of the Woodworkers' Union, the chief C. I. O. affiliate in the Northwest. Pritchett is a native of British Columbia. Numerous loggers and sawmill workers insist that money and effort sorely needed to get adequate wages and safe conditions for the men who work in the forests have gone to defending Bridges and Pritchett from the immigration bureau.

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This complaint, long simmering, boiled over at the annual convention of the woodworkers a few weeks ago in the Oregon lumber town of Klamath Falls. Pritchett, who had always before denounced such statements as "red-baiting," was compelled to accept a motion to send a telegram to Lewis congratulating him on his "recent statement of position condemning Communists aspiring to control the Congress of Industrial Organizations." And when under attack for having allegedly asked subordinates to join the Communist Party, Pritchett won a vote of confidence from the delegates only by the thin margin of 123 to 109. No situation on the Coast disturbs the heads of the C. I. O. more than this one. The anti-Communist faction among the woodworkers, with the bulk of its strength in the comparatively populous Columbia Basin area, has put up Al Hartung of Portland for president against Pritchett. The vote is certain to be close. As a result the union, already harassed by both the A. F. of L. and a galaxy of employers who help finance the Associated Farmers, may be badly split. A candidate representing a compromise between the rival elements in the union would be a possible solution, but neither Pritchett nor the opposition to him seems willing to accept such an adjustment.

Inseparable from this controversy is the fact that as Russian foreign policy has conflicted more and more with that of the United States, the enthusiasm of Western Communists and their sympathizers for the New Deal has waned. When Costigan first proposed and planned the progressive conference, the paramount purpose was to consolidate Pacific Coast liberals and left-wingers behind the President. Medallions inscribed "Draft Roosevelt for '40" appeared on the masthead of the Washington Commonwealth Federation newspaper. A few weeks ago the medallions suddenly disappeared. Sweetland in Oregon says he wrote to Costigan for a new supply of "Draft Roosevelt" buttons and received no reply.

Costigan explains that the "Draft Roosevelt" emblems have been dropped from the literature of the Washington Commonwealth Federation, not because of any lack of confidence in the President, but because the third term has ceased to be a burning issue. "Recent Gallup polls show Roosevelt can have another term if he wants it," Costigan says; "concerted pressure behind a third-term movement is no longer necessary." Costigan also refuses to believe the progressive conference has been killed, though Lewis dealt it a body blow. He says the C. I. O. may yet change its mind about collaboration.

These events are reflected in a recent editorial in the *Post-Intelligencer*. After having been extremely conservative for several years in Seattle, Boettiger shifted in the summer of 1938 and became friendly with Costigan, for whom he got a supper invitation to the White House. Boettiger also began featuring Washington Commonwealth Federation activities in his paper. This week the *Post-Intelligencer* declared:

> In the Pacific Northwest as in every other section of the United States the unmasking of the Communists nationally calls for a showdown locally.
>
> What about the Communist Party leaders in the state of Washington?
>
> A Communist never was nor could be a real liberal, and it will be better for all concerned if such Communists as Morris Rapport, Communist Party leader in this region, and other Communists who have heretofore pretended they were for the New Deal, should announce whether they want to follow Stalin and Molotov or abandon their party entirely.

A clean break with the Communist line may be the price Costigan will have to pay for future access to the leaders of the New Deal. He may not wish to pay it. Developments will be watched closely. Costigan has been a prominent figure in the left-wing movement on the Coast, and Boettiger and his wife form a listening-post for the President in the region.

Numerous political uncertainties have been created by John L. Lewis's blast at the progressive conference. What will be the result of his contention that Littell and other promoters of the project intended to exclude "Senator Burton K. Wheeler and other great liberals in the West"? Immediately it will tend to bolster Wheeler in Montana, where he faces a stiff scrap for reelection next year. To date the Wheeler Presidential boom has not been taken seriously in the Northwest. It is still looked upon as a stunt often performed by a Senator up for another term on the theory that constituents are so impressed by a claim on the sun that they will hand over the moon without haggling.

There is considerable likelihood that Lewis's carefully studied praise of Wheeler is also part of his heavy push against Western Communists, who ever since 1937 have denounced the Montana Senator as a renegade liberal. While the Communists were still in favor of collective security, they constantly berated Wheeler for his isolationist views and his support of the Ludlow war referendum. Should Wheeler by some chance become—and the backing of John L. Lewis may help him to do so—a real contender for the 1940 Democratic nomination, progressives in the West will withhold judgment until the record is complete. He has voted right on most labor issues, and his opposition to the Supreme Court plan is not *prima facie* evidence against him. Even Senator Norris, the greatest liberal of all, lacked enthusiasm for the court plan. The one question Wheeler must answer is about his part in the 1938 Congressional election in the Butte district, when Jerry O'Connell was defeated by the unspeakable Jacob Thorkelson, who sees "Communist-Jewish-Wall Street" plots to control the country, consults with General Moseley, and reads the most fantastically spurious material into the *Record*. O'Connell blames Wheeler for Thorkelson's election.

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By and large New Dealers in the West have refused to be alarmed by Lewis's declaration of war against the Communists and by the defection of Communists from the New Deal. Some of the supporters of the Administration are highly pleased. The Republicans, nobly assisted by the Dies committee, have tried to convince the farmers in this predominantly rural region that the President is in league with Bolsheviks. The present conduct of the Communists is making that task extremely difficult.

The great danger is that in the shadow-boxing between the Communists and their adversaries the real issues will be obscured. Critical problems confront the Far West. Thousands of fruit growers have been ruined by the European war and its effect on foreign markets. Natural resources must be conserved. The Associated Farmers must be exposed. Public-power districts should be established. New reclamation and flood-control projects are needed. Civil liberties must be preserved. The question of old-age pensions has not been settled by the rejection of "Ham and Eggs" in California. Countless men are still out of work. The refugees from the Dust Bowl cannot live indefinitely in the squalor of tourist camps. It would be tragic if these problems were forgotten in a conflict over communism, especially now that the Communists by their recent behavior have discredited themselves.

Last week the Bonneville Dam Authority, guided by the ever-ready Mr. Ickes, signed a contract to deliver electricity to the Oregon town of Forest Grove. Householders will pay $1.20 for forty kilowatt-hours of power that now cost them $2.20. This sort of performance makes more converts for liberalism than a hundred battles on the ideological front.

India's War Within a War

BY KRISHNALAL SHRIDHARANI

THE National Congress ministries governing eight of the eleven provinces of British India resigned in the last week of October in protest against Great Britain's denial of democracy to India's 365,000,000 inhabitants. Negotiations are now over, at least for the time being, and the British have declared that their intention is "to sit tight." The British governors of the eight provinces affected are now ruling by their "special powers" and by ordinances. On the Nationalist front Gandhi has announced that he will initiate civil disobedience if he finds "India ready." It is a war within a war now.

However, the Nationalists assert that it is not their policy to "take advantage of Britain's predicament in Europe." They have started the fight, not because Britain is engaged in a life-and-death struggle in Europe, but because India has been dragged into that struggle against its wishes. During the World War India contributed $500,000,000 to the Allied war machine. In addition war loans to the value of $700,000,000 were purchased by India. Finished products to the value of $1,250,000,000 were sent to the Allies' side from India. The sacrifice of India's manhood was even more impressive. About 1,338,620 Indians were dispatched to the various battlefields in France, Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia—178,000 more men than all the troops contributed by the dominions of Canada, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. In exchange, India was given promises of dominion status by the British government, but all that it actually got at the conclusion of the war was the lame Montford reforms, which created great dissatisfaction and resulted finally in the massacre of Amritsar. This time, therefore, it wants immediate "honest action" in place of promises.

The mutually hostile attitude of the Congress Party and the British government is based solely on the Indian situation; no foreign propaganda is aggravating the conflict. The Nationalists are counting on India's strength, the power of millions galvanized by political consciousness. Twenty-five years of strong organization and stern discipline have made the National Congress into a political machine which, the Nationalists feel, is prepared to cope with all eventualities. In rejecting the Congress demand, on the other hand, Britain seems to be counting on India's weakness, its internal dissensions and its impotence against external foes. Thus the present deadlock is inspired by contradictory appraisals of the complexity of India, and only time can establish the validity of one against the other.

Both the contending parties, however, agree upon the issues which will provide the real test of strength. The answer to the question of whether a free and independent India is an immediate possibility seems to be tied up with the two problems of minorities and defense. The Marquess of Zetland, Secretary of State for India, has rather sarcastically advised Nationalists that before demanding dominion status "they should strive after that agreement among themselves without which they will surely fail to achieve that unity which is essential to the nationhood of which those with vision among her leaders have long dreamed." To this Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, militant Congress leader, has replied that the Delhi negotiations

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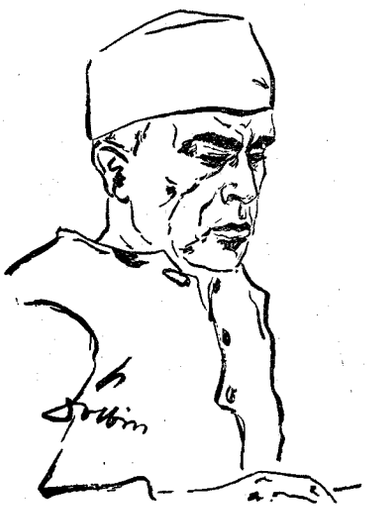
failed, not because of disagreements between the Hindus and the Mohammedans, but because of "a fundamental difference" between the British government and the Congress regarding Indian liberties. Gandhi has gone a step farther and accused the bureaucracy of reviving the "ugly spectacle of Britain's playing off the Moslem League against the Congress."



Jawaharlal Nehru

India, along with Europe and America, is suffering from the contemporary epidemic of a minority problem. In India, however, the problem has a somewhat different setting. The real minorities—the Sikhs, the Parsis, the Christians, the Buddhists, and the Jains—are apparently at peace with the Hindu majority; they do not ask for any special privileges unless such privileges are granted to the Moslems. The safeguards they seek are not against the majority but against a major minority. Both Lord Zetland and Lord Linlithgow, Viceroy of India, have failed thus far to show that any minority except the Moslems is disputing the claim of the Congress Party to represent all.

There are in India, in round figures, 250,000,000 Hindus as against 80,000,000 Mohammedans. Thus the ratio is three to one in favor of the Hindus. But can 80,000,000 people, ask the Nationalists, ever be considered a political minority weak enough to be exploited in a democracy? Moreover, the Northwest Frontier Province, which is more predominantly Mohammedan than the rest of India—95 per cent of the population is Moslem—is under the complete control of the Congress Party, and Gandhi has always had more devout followers there than in predominantly Hindu provinces. It is such statistical facts, joined to the traditional tolerance of the Hindus, that lead Nationalists to ascribe bad faith to the British when they raise the question of Hindu-Moslem differences. According to the Nationalists, such differences are not real but are artificially created to serve imperialist purposes. Moreover, as Nehru asserts, "no one stands in the way of an unequivocal declaration of the war aims and Indian freedom by the British government except itself." Once Indian liberties become reality, he further contends, this "internal problem" of India will be quickly solved. Contrary to the impression created by the British and American press, therefore, Mohammedans are not opposed to the Nationalists' struggle for freedom. All they want is special consideration in the future constitution of India, and the Congress Party does not dispute their right to it.

Analogous to the Hindu-Moslem dispute is the problem of the princes. Some 560 big and small Maharajahs rule over one-third of India. As Lord Zetland told American reporters recently, Great Britain has pledged itself to "provide for their protection against aggression from without and rebellion from within." The almost overenthusiastic support that these princes pledged to the king-emperor at the outbreak of hostilities in Europe becomes understandable in the light of Lord Zetland's statement. To the Nationalists the attitude of the princes is not a surprise; they have always regarded the Maharajahs as an appendage of the British problem. The Congress Party appears to be ready to nullify the war aid of the princes through the "direct action" of the All-India States' Peoples' Congress, which is the counterpart of the Congress Party of British India.

The question of the defense of India against possible external foes is the second major issue which will decide —both the Congress Party and the British seem to agree—whether an independent India is an immediate possibility. The British maintain that "the defense of India could not be left to an Indian government." They also expect that the immediacies of the present war, especially since the German-Russian pact, will make the Nationalists more cautious in their demands and restrained in their aspirations. If one takes all the fantastic conjectures into account, there is no power in Europe or Asia which is not "reliably believed" to have designs on India. To military experts in India, however, there are only two frontiers and two possible aggressors: Japan in the east, across Burma, Siam, and French Indo-China; and Russia in the north, across Afghanistan.

The erstwhile apathy of Indian leaders toward the threat in the east has been replaced by a concerned interest in Japan's actions ever since the China war started. India has engaged in a more active and aggressive boycott of things Japanese than any other country in the world except, of course, China. The Congress Party has sent out medical units and money to express its moral sympathy with the Chinese cause. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru flew to China to confer with Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, taking the route that Japanese planes would take if they were to bomb Calcutta. However, the Nationalists' policy with regard to Japan is that of erring on the safe side. They know very well that Japan has not yet conquered China. Even if the conquest is made complete, it will be decades before Japan can consolidate its gains in China, and until that time any Indian adventure would be bound to end in disaster. The resisting Chinese could cut the line of supply at various points; and, moreover, the Japanese would have to reckon with French Indo-China, Siam, and Burma before they reached India.

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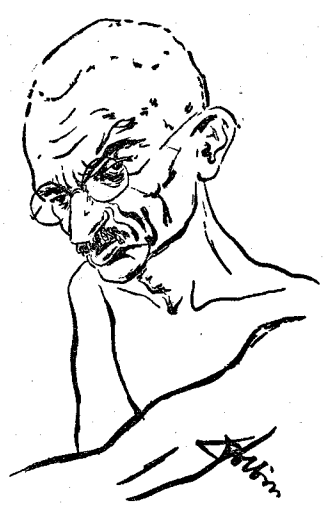
The expressed Japanese designs, furthermore, are in other directions. The Japanese want above everything else land for their surplus population. Their statesmen have declared that they do not contemplate settling it in any tropical country. Moreover, the standard of life in India is no higher than in Japan, and the tide of emigration, unlike water, tends to flow from a lower to a higher level. Australia rather than India is likely to attract the Japanese. Or, according to latest reports from Japan, they may seek a still different avenue for their aggressions. Taking a hint from the recent crisis in Holland, they are now directing glances at the Dutch colonies. If Holland is involved in the war, the rich Netherlands Indies will be next on Japan's list, not India. According to a columnist in *Yomiuri,* "The European war may be a complex affair, but in such an event the situation in the Far East becomes very clear."

Japan cannot, furthermore, expect any help from within India. It is true that the average Indian looks with admiration at Japan's phenomenal rise as an Asiatic power. It is more or less correct that he derives a sort of vicarious pleasure when a Japanese soldier slaps an Englishman in China. But Japan's Chinese adventure has destroyed all possibility of India ever following Nippon in a "revolt of Asia" against the domination of the West. Japan's pan-Buddhism movement has had some favorable response from the militant wing of the Hindu Mahasabha, a communal organization of the Hindus. More and more Indian students go to Japan, and each year more and more Buddhist temples are opened in India to stress the unity between Hinduism and Buddhism. Nevertheless, according to the best information, pan-Buddhism has merely been a counter-move against the pan-Islam movement started by the Near Eastern Moslem countries and some Mohammedans of northern India. The show of loyalty for the pan-Buddhism doctrine of Japan on the part of militant Hindus has always been a tactical move to stop the extraterritorial loyalties of certain sections of Moslems in India.

The only other power believed to have designs on India is Russia. But Russia cannot fight on three frontiers. And between Russia and India stand insurmountable ranges, the Himalayas, with only the Khyber Pass as a place of "contact." All military experts agree that 30,000 crack troops of the Indian army could keep an army of a million at bay there for years. It may be, as Augur conjectures, that Stalin "looks southward, where, beyond his native Georgia, lies Iran, the object of the traditional Russian aggressive policy, because that way lies the road to the Persian Gulf and the riches of Araby and India." But even if Stalin's army could easily get through the snipers in Iran's northern mountains, it would be a long way to India.

Russia cannot depend on a social revolution within India to supplement its hypothetical assault from outside. The Indian Communist Party is still an illegal organization, negligible in numbers and influence. The Socialists are more like left-wing Nationalists than like Communists. Recently industrialized India has too small a proletariat to be the vanguard of the revolution. And the great population of small farmers in India still think of their miseries in terms of fate, indulging very little in ratiocination and Marxist hopes.

So the Japanese danger and the Russian menace do not appear to be as near home to Indians themselves as to the India Office in England. Just as they regard the Hindu-Moslem problem as artificially stimulated and greatly exaggerated by the third party which profits by it, so they see in the bogy of aggression from outside an effort to dull the edge of India's revolutionary ardor. British statesmen have failed to sober the Congress Party by reminding it of dissensions within India and the threat of aggression from without. On the contrary, these two points have had a quickening effect on the demand for complete independence. Gandhi, Nehru, and other Congress leaders seem to be insisting that final solution of the Hindu-Moslem problem cannot be achieved until the outsider who foments disputes is eliminated altogether. Likewise, they maintain that India will never be prepared to defend itself under the present British policy of keeping Indian defenses weak so that it will continue to hide behind the British navy. India will have to take a chance if it is ever going to be a great and independent nation, and this, they further argue, is as good a time as any. It is only in the light of these facts that Gandhi's distinction between dominion status and complete independence, and his insistence on the latter, assumes significance.



Gandhi

India's war within the war, consequently, seems as complicated as the major conflict now in progress in Europe, and the termination of the former appears to be as distant as that of the latter. The passive non-cooperation of the Congress Party may turn any day into defiant "direct action" calling for civil disobedience and parallel government. Meanwhile, the Laborites in England and liberals in neutral countries will wait for the day when England will implement its professions of democracy by "honest action" in India. With von Ribbentrop and Molotov drawing attention to "unremitting national oppression in India," only honesty about Indian liberties can impart a moral tone to the Allied cause.

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Writers in the Wilderness

I. JOHN STEINBECK

BY MARGARET MARSHALL

JOHN STEINBECK has probably had more publicity since April than any other living writer; but he seems to have a more healthy attitude toward his work than many of his commentators. In an interview which appeared in the Los Angeles *Times* in July he is reported to have said, "I'm not even a finished writer yet." "They're not going to lionize me," he went on to say; "I think of the Arabian story-tellers, the best writers in the world. You didn't find them installed in luxurious surroundings. They squatted in the market-place and told and retold stories, and they refined and perfected them to the point you find in 'Arabian Nights.'" So far as I have been able to discover this is not an expression of false modesty. Steinbeck is extremely shy; the fact is attested by competent witnesses. At the same time this shyness seems to have nothing to do with a lack of confidence in his work, though it should be recorded also in this connection that in mid-career, just before "The Grapes of Wrath," he tore up a manuscript dealing with similar material which he decided was "false." I have no doubt that, being human, he enjoys praise, but he has consistently shunned the mechanics and functionaries of publicity, for which he has a genuine if exaggerated dislike. His remarks do indicate a youthful and self-conscious cast of mind which is characteristic and which documents his own assertion that he is not a finished writer yet, especially in so far as the term means maturity of mind as well as skill with words.

To say that Steinbeck is not yet mature is no reproach, for the process of growing up in America is in the nature of an obstacle race. Barring happy accidents of birth or background, it is apt to be long drawn out, and the middle-aged adolescent is one of the better-known American types. The writer in any country is self-made; but in a country as vast and various as the United States the process must often begin at a more rudimentary stage than in countries having a long and homogeneous common experience. The talented youngster in the average American community, especially the Western community, may have a parent or encounter a teacher with a sense of direction; otherwise, even if he is drawn toward literature and art, his experience of it is disorderly; in any case it is incomplete. His education is haphazard and as likely as not "elective" at the very point where he needs firm direction. And all about him play an indigenous anti-intellectualism which has value as a corrective but not as a prejudice, an undue emphasis on money success, and the romantic assumption that American life is superior because it is fluid, "free," and defies classification.

John Steinbeck, as far as I can gather, presents a fairly typical example of the development of a writer in the American wilderness. He was born in 1902 in Monterey County, California, and except for short intervals has always lived in that state which grows everything in outsizes from scenery to landowners to Aimee McPhersons. He grew up in an outlying community of ranches among Americans a generation or two removed from the frontier and a mixture of Mexicans and the other assorted races who have been California's menials. He went to the Salinas High School, and spent some time at Stanford University. He worked summers on ranches; for one season at least he had a job in a sugar factory. He is of German and Irish stock. His mother taught school, his father was county treasurer—he has written many of his stories, by hand, in ledgers dated in the early 1900's. He refused to see me, so I must rely on photographs and the accounts of other people in respect to his personal appearance. He is six feet tall, and husky. According to one informer, he has rather stolid "German" build and features to which "Irish blue" eyes lend an unexpected mobility and liveliness. After he left Stanford he spent some time in New York City, where he worked briefly as a newspaper reporter and, also briefly, as a hodcarrier. From all accounts his hatred of New York includes fear and defiance.

He has had little experience of the urban side of American life, including the "literary" world, which he avoids. On the other hand, an intense love of nature and of rural life are more than apparent in his books, most of which deal with the land and people close to the land. He is said to have a dread of insecurity, which is ascribed to years of living from hand to mouth but probably springs from deeper sources—the sense of insecurity might be called the national neurosis; he still lives frugally, and I understand that he has distributed his considerable earnings among various banks in deposits of $5,000, the maximum amount guaranteed by the government. But though he has been sensible enough to insure his economic future, there is no evidence to suggest that he is unduly cautious or has any respect for respectability. His books bear quite different testimony, and one acquaintance has cited the simple happy-go-lucky existence

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of "Tortilla Flat" as an indication of what he considers the good life. He is married but has no children.

One of the most common literary responses to American life is the recurrent autobiographical novel, the attempt to organize the writer's own experience and relate it to the world about him; all too often it is written "from scratch" and as if no other writer had ever written. Another is the tendency to oppose to the sprawling American scene some species of perfection, such as the romantic novel or a pellucid style. Some of our best writers merely walk out to reside in a smaller and more nearly perfect world, with more or less success according to their talents. Henry Miller is a refugee from Brooklyn. Having known Idaho, I can't help regarding Ezra Pound, of Idaho and Paris, translating a Chinese poem, as a living protest against Senator Borah. California has been known to produce aesthetes.

John Steinbeck's first published book (1929) was "Cup of Gold," a romantic account "with occasional references to history" of Sir Henry Morgan, a buccaneer in the Caribbean later knighted by Charles II. It was the fourth he had written; of the others, according to his friend Joseph Henry Jackson, one was turned down, two were never shown, all have now been destroyed. The style of "Cup of Gold" is self-conscious and literary; it shows a talent for describing nature, a tendency to personify the elements, a pleasure in reciting cruelties, a youthful, sentimental, and obvious symbolism, and a delight in fine phrases, as if the young author were aspiring to a style like a cup of gold.

All of these elements have persisted in his work, down to and including "The Grapes of Wrath." Beginning with his second published book, Steinbeck's subject matter has been the people and country of his experience, but in the novels preceding "The Grapes of Wrath," with the exception of "In Dubious Battle," they were turned to exotic uses. His second and third books, "The Pastures of Heaven" (1932) and "To a God Unknown" (1933), were concentrated expressions of his romantic and "mystical" attitude toward the land, which has been and continues to be his most convincing character. It is not only the background but the matrix of many of his human characters, and their relation to it is so central that they often seem like mere projections. This is particularly true of "The Pastures of Heaven," which also displays a related preoccupation with eccentric human types, the "naturals" or "children." They are a temptation to young writers, but they are usually successful only in revealing the immaturity of their inventors.

In "Tortilla Flat" (1935) Steinbeck projected a sentimental idyl of the *paisanos* of Monterey—"a mixture of Spanish, Indian, Mexican, and assorted Caucasian bloods." Its heroes are Danny and his friends, a group of amorai—and according to some of Steinbeck's reviewers immortal—children. Again the children. The story, which aspires to be a legend, has charm and irony and flows past the mind without impediment. But the "simple" style is superimposed and carefully fashioned; the reality of Tortilla Flat, pressed through the Steinbeck sieve of melodious phrases and a tendency to work in conceptions that border on conceits, comes out as something less than real.

"Tortilla Flat" was his first success, and it is not surprising, for it has the kind of charm which made Alexander Woollcott call it a "golden book" and evoked comparison with Robert Nathan's "One More Spring." It has the quality of remoteness which the public likes.

Since "Tortilla Flat" the self-conscious, pellucid style has been contending less successfully with the raw material of life in California, with far more interesting results. In 1935 and 1936 Steinbeck became absorbed in the refugees from the Dust Bowl who were pouring into the valleys of California. He contributed to *The Nation* of September 12, 1936, an article which might serve as a synopsis of "The Grapes of Wrath." He had published in the same year "In Dubious Battle," which tells the story of a strike of fruit-pickers who had come in their "jalopies" from the ruined lands to the east. It is fast-moving and full of suspense, but its plot proceeds to its disastrous end with the precision of a penny shocker, and it is interlarded with primer-like explanations by Mac, the party leader, on how to arouse the masses which at times border on the burlesque. At one point Mac says as if in answer to the reader's protest, "I don't know why it is, but every time I talk to you I either end up soapboxing or giving a lecture." Jim replies, "Well, hell, Mac, I like to listen," and the lessons go on.

When Jim says such things as, "The house where we lived was always filled with anger. Anger hung in the house like smoke," it sounds more like Steinbeck than like Jim. And the doctor's unresolved musings over "group-man" are too obviously the musings of Steinbeck. There is, it should be noted, the perennial "natural," this time a worker who has been beaten so much by the police that he is not quite right. He is killed, and his corpse is duly put to work by Mac, with due explanations to Jim, to arouse the strikers to fighting pitch. Jim, needless to say, is killed as inevitably as any character in Robinson Jeffers. But though the plot of "In Dubious Battle" seems too neat and the individual characters are not convincing, the book does carry the impact of the reality it deals with.

"Of Mice and Men" was deliberately written as a piece of theater and need not be judged as anything more ambitious. It seems like a throwback after "In Dubious Battle." One of Steinbeck's beloved halfwits who likes to pet soft little animals is filled with Steinbeck's yearning after the land. He ends up by committing an act of Steinbeck violence. Much has been made of the tenderness of the story, but its success is more reasonably accounted for by its slick writing and the fact that from

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the first line the spectator is led to expect some final act of sexual violence by the monstrous Lennie. Steinbeck said it was an experiment in writing a novel like a play. The experiment was successful on Broadway. It plays upon the oldest human susceptibility. One might even suspect that it was a deliberate and adroit hoax to show up that susceptibility, but in that case it must also be set down as a burlesque of the characters and conceits of Steinbeck.

Whatever "Of Mice and Men" signified, his next book, "The Long Valley," a collection of short stories, contained a sequence, The Red Pony, in which the characters, particularly the boy Jody, really come to life. It is a simple story, told this time in a genuinely simple style, of a boy and his desire for a pony. The second section, which is not organic to the story, falls again into trite mysticism; at the end of the final section, when to save the colt the mare must be killed, trite symbolism intrudes. But the story as a whole, which seems to have an autobiographical basis, is refreshingly free of the Steinbeck preoccupations. For once the feeling inherent in the material is directly communicated. The Red Pony marked a real gain in maturity.

"The Grapes" shows a continuation of growth. It is as if the powerful theme of the great migration from the Dust Bowl had shattered the "golden cup" of the Steinbeck style, though large pieces of it still cling. The characters of Ma and the Preacher are early Steinbeck. Ma is presented from the very beginning on page 100 as a concept, not developed as a character. There are many such substitutions for characterization, which is Steinbeck's weakest point. Throughout the book the major characters are forced to speak in Steinbeck's tongues. Ma, here, is not herself:

> You're gonna have a baby, Rosasharn, and that's sompin' to you lonely and away. That's gonna hurt you, an' the hurt'll be lonely hurt, an' this here tent is alone in the worl'. . . . They's a time of change, an' when that comes, dyin' is a piece of all dyin', and bearin' is a piece of all bearin', an' bearin' and dyin' is two pieces of the same thing.

The author often steps aside from the actual story to give his views in "musical" prose on men, machines, and life. Some of these perorations advance the plot and are in themselves effective, but some are mere eloquence; the device itself is a literary short-cut which is in reality a detour. If some of these had been eliminated and others merged into the story, the structure of "Grapes of Wrath" would be integrated; as it is, it is held together by the theme. This theme reflects the early Steinbeck fixation about the land and man's relation to it, but it appears here as a practical problem in human existence. The impact of a stunning reality on Steinbeck the man has turned a youthful preoccupation into a vital social theme—the expropriation of thousands of people, their ignorant and pitiful trek to the land of milk and honey, and their assault against the stone wall of large-scale ownership. Steinbeck's angry pleasure in rasping the nerves of his readers appears in a justifiable insistence on the cruelties inflicted on his chosen people. His description of a countryside ruined by drought and creeping dust, which opens the book, is not only a description of landscape, for which he has a special talent; it moves and has a point. His use of four-letter words, which in "Of Mice and Men" seems merely one more element of titillation, is profuse; in a few passages it appears superfluous and literary, but on the whole it is not obtrusive, despite the chorus of self-righteous indignation it has aroused. (It was not surprising that Westbrook Pegler registered the most inordinate protest; it is part of the intense vulgarity of his own language that he never uses the words he objects to in Steinbeck.)

The "natural" crops up again in "The Grapes of Wrath" in the character of Noah, the strange son of the Joads, but he is a mere shadow of his former self and he disappears with hardly a nod from an author who has spent so much time on him in the past. The puerile symbolism appears at the end when the daughter of the Joads who has borne a dead baby gives her breast to a starving migrant, and Granpa's revolt and death on leaving the land of his fathers is from the same piece of cloth.

It remains to be seen whether Steinbeck's weakness in characterization is the result of incapacity or a lack of maturity. The character of Jody in The Red Pony suggests that he is capable of creating character when he draws on his actual knowledge and experience and when for one reason or another he feels no compulsion to endow the actors in his stories with sentimental preconceptions about the land or the family or the "meaning of life." His minor characters often have more reality than his "dedicated" major ones.

"The Grapes of Wrath" has sold more than 300,000 copies. It is a gratifying fact but not easily explained. It appeals to the crusader in most Americans; it has the elements of the tall tale; the story of thousands upon thousands of Joads pouring westward in covered jalopies is intensely dramatic and affecting. The plight of the sharecropper is so abject that it has drawn tears from many a lady in furs, though little has been done as yet to alleviate it.

The book has had an enormous amount of publicity. Three copies have been scheduled to be burned by a library in East St. Louis. It has won denunciation and attempts at suppression from the Associated Farmers of California. A headline writer in the Youngstown, Ohio, *Vindicator* went so far as to proclaim that "Steinbeck Spoils Fine Book by Urging Marxist Uprising." He was speaking out of his own, not Steinbeck's formulation. For though the implications of his picture of the Okies may easily suggest a Marxist solution to the average

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newspaperman, class-struggle conscious after the current fashion, Steinbeck nowhere projects such a solution. On the contrary his outburst against the tractor because it destroys the relationship between man and the land amounts to a rather naive paean against the machine: ". . . the land bore under iron, and under iron gradually died; for it was not loved or hated. . . ." What the Okies want and, one suspects, what Steinbeck wants for them—a little white house and a piece of land of their own—sounds more like the old formula of forty acres and a mule than "bolshevik" collectives. His next project is a series of articles on "Unemployment: Its Causes and the Possible Steps for Its Alleviation." His "possible steps" are quite unpredictable, but any widening of his experience can do him no harm as a writer. The writer is not required to formulate solutions; his only obligation, if he selects social themes, is to understand them. Steinbeck's facility in writing is at present far greater than his understanding of either social forces or human character.

"The Grapes of Wrath" is now being filmed. Mr. Steinbeck told Darryl Zanuck in a reported interview that he was keeping in reserve the $75,000 he got for the movie rights and intended to sue if the picture violates the theme and spirit of the book. Mr. Zanuck told Mr. Steinbeck that he had had detectives investigate the plight of the Okies and had been informed that conditions were much worse than Steinbeck pictures them. This suggests a new social use for detectives which only a Hollywood producer would have thought up.

[*This is the first of a series of three articles. The second will appear in an early issue.*]

Everybody's Business

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

Aircraft Preferred

THE bright September morn which Wall Street hailed with such enthusiasm when Europe plunged into war was quickly obscured by autumnal fog. Now the prevailing mood is not depression—business activity and current profits are too good for that—but uncertainty. War babies, it is agreed, ought not to be counted until they are hatched, and the unorthodox shape of the European conflict suggests that in most cases the process is going to be prolonged.

There is one industry, however, whose war fledglings are already emerging from the incubator and, literally, taking wing. Even before the war came, aviation plants were achieving production records thanks to mounting orders from Britain and France as well as our own army and navy. The embargo provided no more than a check, and now that it has been lifted, the volume of new orders assures that industry of at least one busy and profitable year.

Aircraft construction is a new industry which has never had a chance to achieve any stability. It was barely launched before the last war forced on it a mushroom growth followed by an equally spectacular deflation. Recovery was slow and painful, but in 1929 a post-war peak was reached with the production of 6,034 units, of which only 677 were military. Total sales in that year, including engines, spares, and accessories, amounted to $87,000,000, which meant that the industry still played a very minor part in the national economy. Moreover, since it catered to the luxury market, demand fell off precipitately during the depression. It did not climb back to its 1929 level until 1936, and recovery then was made possible by the growth of the military and export markets rather than by an increase in the domestic demand for civil aircraft. The following year showed some improvement in this section, and a new sales record of $124,000,000 was achieved.

With the current year all such figures have been left far behind. Although it is not possible to forecast output for 1939, it may be noted that the Aeronautical Chamber of Commerce estimates present capacity of the industry as equal to a rate of 15,000 machines a year. The *Wall Street Journal* has put this in money terms at $674,000,000 and compares this figure with a current backlog for the industry of $533,000,000.

Output on the scale that these statistics suggest is dependent, however, on the ability of manufacturers to concentrate on single models and thus put into effect straight-line production methods. A number of plants have sufficient orders in hand to adopt this system; others are still working below capacity on half a dozen or more different types. Under these circumstances actual output may remain considerably below the theoretical optimum, but even so, barring an early peace, the industry seems to be heading for a 1940 record which will dwarf that of all previous periods.

What does this boom mean in terms of employment? The answer is: very little in comparison with the magnitude of our unemployment problem. Aircraft and engine plants are now giving work to about 50,000 people, and those in the industry believe that this number may be doubled in the next twelve months. Add another 50,000 for extra workers engaged in supplying accessories and materials, and the total is still far from impressive. Nor does the industry seem likely to provide that outlet for new investment which is so badly needed. As we have seen, capacity of existing plants can be stretched very considerably. Some increase in factory space and machinery may be required, but at best that will drain but a few drops from the pool of idle capital.

In any case the aviation industry is on guard against overexpansion: it does not want to experience another 1920 at the end of the boom. Consequently the prices it is quoting to foreign buyers make possible rapid amortization of extra capital expenditures. Contracts also contain safeguards against the outbreak of peace. Most are understood to be non-cancelable, while others provide for the liquidation of all costs of any undelivered portion plus a profit. Thanks to such precautions the manufacturers should be in good financial shape to withstand eventual cessation of military orders. That, however, will not be much consolation for the workers who will be let out. Hence the question arises: Has aviation a peace potential comparable with its war potential?

It so happens that this year has seen air transport also

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creating new records. On the basis of the first nine months it is estimated that passenger miles flown will exceed by nearly 40 per cent the previous peak reached in 1938. Mail revenues have also expanded, and, it is claimed, these no longer represent a subsidy since the amount paid by the government is now covered by the sale of air-mail stamps. As a result most air lines seem likely to show profits, and the total will certainly exceed anything previously achieved.

This increase in air travel appears partly as a reflection of general improvement in business as compared with 1938. But an important additional factor has been a marked reduction in accidents. Just recently the Civil Aeronautics Authority was able to announce that 500 million passenger miles had been flown since the last accident which injured or killed a passenger. The previous record was 210 million passenger miles without an accident. If the risk element continues to diminish in this manner, a further rapid increase in the air-travel habit seems almost certain.

The outlook in this respect is not altogether healthy for the railroads, but it may prove the post-war salvation of the aircraft manufacturers, for whom the task of reverting from military to civil planes should not prove extremely onerous. It must be noted, however, that the number of units employed in the American air-transport system is very small compared to those embodied in a first-class modern air force. Hence before civil demand can effectively replace military demand it will be necessary for air travel to treble or quadruple in volume. The industry is also looking for a further growth of output from a gradual increase in private ownership. Its hopes are based on the government pilot-training scheme which will teach thousands of young men to fly. Provided that a fair percentage of those trained can afford to keep a machine—it is not the first cost that counts so much as the upkeep—an enlarged market for light planes does seem possible.

This, however, is by no means the chief contribution of the government to the promotion of civil aviation. Most industrialists attack government investment in general and tend to overlook any benefits it may have conferred on their own section of industry. Thus the very large government investment in airports and other essential aids to aviation has seldom received the credit due it. How many people realize that public money spent for such purposes considerably exceeds the net asset value of all the aircraft-manufacturing corporations? Up to July 1 this year the much-maligned WPA had carried out 1,500 aviation projects, including the construction of 150 airports, extensions and improvements to 500 others, erection or repair of over 300 hangars and airport administration buildings, and the provision of 10,000 direction markers, scores of air beacons, and other navigation aids. Federal expenditures on such projects through WPA exceed $134,000,000, and contributions from other public authorities bring the total up to $172,000,000.

If the provision of ground facilities for aviation had been left to private enterprise, we should almost certainly not have the country-wide network of airports which exists today, for such undertakings are not apt to yield quick profits. Yet without them civil aviation would hardly be progressing at its present rate, and the opportunity it affords to private capital would be curtailed.

In the Wind

IN THE CORRESPONDENCE column of the *Writer's Digest,* this letter recently appeared: "Sir: We are accepting pulp fiction dealing with the present European war. The former ban on anti-German stories has been lifted. For *Air Adventures* we would like air-story writers to make their heroes English, French, or American adventurers. For *Fantastic Adventures* and *Amazing Stories* we will welcome stories dealing with Nazi intrigue in the United States. (*Signed*) Jerry K. Westerfeld, assistant editor.

SHORTLY AFTER war broke out, a former London correspondent relates, a British diplomat was told by newspapermen of reports that Italy was entering the conflict on Germany's side. The diplomat yawned: "After all, it is Germany's turn," he said.

THE NEW YORK *TIMES,* covering the Pope's latest encyclical, made a notable change in its late editions. In the midnight edition the second paragraph of the Rome dispatch ended with this sentence: "There was also [in the encyclical] what was understood as a clear admonition to the Reverend Charles E. Coughlin." The sentence was subsequently eliminated.

BRITAIN'S MINISTRY of Information continues inadvertently to furnish the brightest war news. Recently a correspondent received an impressive-looking envelope from the Ministry marked "Private." He opened it and found another envelope marked "Secret." He tore it open. Inside he found a galley proof of a B. B. C. broadcast which had been given over the air three days before.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT won't give Harold Lavine, editorial director of the Institute for Propaganda Analysis, a passport. He had intended to visit London and Paris and several neutral capitals to report on war propaganda emanating from those cities to the United States. In denying him a passport, the department invoked the President's ruling that only people with "urgent business" would be permitted to enter war zones. Two days after his request was turned down a New York stylist sailed for Paris on the Clipper to study fashions there.

GOVERNOR JOHN BRICKER of Ohio won his post over ex-Governor Martin L. Davey last year, and the election didn't increase their friendship. Recently the Scripps-Howard wire service in Ohio brought this news to city editors' desks: "Governor Bricker today proclaimed October 27 as Davey Day." Shortly afterward, reports *Editor and Publisher,* a correction came over the wire: "Change Davey to Navy."

ISOLATIONISTS ARE planning to blanket the United States with the slogan: "Let God Save the King."

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Germany Has Power

Berlin, October 25

GERMANY wants peace. Of that there can be no doubt whatever. Everybody wants it except perhaps a few persons in the immediate entourage of Hitler who may still be cherishing the dream of ruling the world set forth by Rauschning as the motivation of the inner Nazi circle. There is unmistakable evidence that a move for peace by either Roosevelt or the Pope would be welcomed, and there is not a diplomat in Berlin who does not wish that such an offer would be made. No one believes that if representatives of the combatant nations should meet, they could possibly adjourn without having reached some kind of compromise settlement. One diplomat here said to me that he favored a "dishonorable peace" rather than a war which will crack European civilization and be of a *Schrecklichkeit* far beyond anything seen in Poland or during the World War. Speeches like Goebbels's attack on Churchill and Ribbentrop's remarks in Danzig seem to shut the door on hope that the final disaster will be averted. Yet the journalists here refuse to give up hope. They think that underneath something is going on. One can only pray that this is the case. At least the final order to go ahead has not yet been given.

The military men here and many others are absolutely confident that Germany will win the war; some think in two months, others in a year, and still others in a year and a half. I found no one who believes that Germany can be starved out, not even anti-Nazis. I have talked with people who are eager for Hitler's defeat, but they all say that the British blockade will not succeed. They believe that with the German people so well regimented and obedient and everything rationed at the start there will be enough food to pull through on. It will be hard going. Belts will have to be tightened more than once, but as Göring said, there are plenty of Germans who can afford to lose a good many pounds—particularly himself—and those who can't afford to do so will just have to be hungry and stand it. No protests will be tolerated.

The industrialists believe, too, that practically all the necessary raw materials can be obtained by hook or by crook. What no one can explain is how these things are going to be paid for. An attempt will be made to carry the barter system farther than ever before. Machinery is to be built or dug up somehow to pay Stalin—"little cousin Stalin" he is called here by many. But every machine made for barter takes away just so much iron and steel from other machines vital to the war. I am told that Schacht was asked this week how the war was to be paid for and that he said he did not know.

The plans for war take one's breath away, they are so utterly horrifying. The *Blitzkrieg* idea has not for a moment been forgotten. The Nazis plan to overwhelm England just as rapidly as they overran Poland. No concealment is made of the fact that they have something very big up their sleeves. One man connected with the high command even talks of German guns at Calais in two months. Most people, however, say that the Maginot Line is impregnable. One or two declare that it is not as good as the Siegfried Line, having been built eight or ten years ago, and go so far as to say that a technical means of breaching it will be found, which, I take it, foretells a tremendous war in the air, using thousands and thousands of airplanes to overwhelm all opposition, to search out the British army wherever it may be in France and utterly to destroy it.

As for the invincible British navy, the Nazis are certain that they can build submarines faster than the British can sink them, and that next June or July there will be a sea war which will put an end to the British Empire in very short order, if it has survived until then. The militarists are confident, too, that the French army will not stand up if idle a year; they say that 95 per cent of the French officers and men captured on the western front declare that they went unwillingly into the war. The military admit that they have a very high opinion of General Gamelin, but somehow or other they assign him no role whatever. They intimate, however, that he may be "kept busy on other fronts," presumably the Italian and Spanish.

If the German people knew all this they would, I think, be horrified, too. But the government is rapidly achieving its purpose of inflaming public sentiment against the British. I have seen a change in the ten days that I have been here. The English are being made Public Enemy Number One by daily press attacks of incredible scurrillity, such as to make one ashamed of being a journalist. One would hardly know from reading the newspapers that there is such a country as France. The effort obviously is to render the French indifferent to the war by simply ignoring them, in the hope that very soon

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French discipline will disintegrate. How that is to be reconciled with guns at Calais in two months I leave to others to work out. I am also unable to reconcile what took place in Poland with the statements that London and Paris will not be bombed because that would have a bad effect on neutral opinion throughout the world and stiffen the morale of the enemy, as it did in Spain and China.

I have met many people who are horrified by the whole business, but as one great industrialist said to me: "What can you do when the other fellow has the revolvers?" I have heard the estimate of those who are opposed to Hitler put as high as 90 per cent. The lowest figure given is 75 per cent. I should say that almost everybody outside the party has a grievance of some kind. Some dislike Hitler for one thing, and some for another. Some say that if the war had not come, an opposition would have developed. I can find no basis for that. I only know definitely that I still find a great many kindly, high-minded Germans, just as in the past, who want their country to do the right, the Christian thing and not be a brutal, overbearing bully, basing its whole policy on force. But they dare not move; they have no leaders and no program or policy. If there were open elections, they would be exactly in the position of the Republicans, who have no constructive program to offer in place of the New Deal.

I have tried to find out how the bulk of the great industrialists stand with respect to Hitler. They do not let anybody know; it is not healthy to do so. But it is safe to assume that they are anything but happy. Fritz Thyssen, who did so much to further the rise of Hitler, has now left Germany and is living in Switzerland, let us hope repenting his sins. They are all badly scared by the pact with Russia; I have not met one man anywhere who approves of that treaty except the military men, who admit that it is a bad treaty but say it was a military necessity forced on them by the British negotiations with Stalin. They admit frankly that they could not fight successfully on two fronts, and they defend the turning over of the Baltic states to Stalin on the ground that if Russia had come into a general war, Stalin would have grabbed those little countries anyway. It is one of the most maddening things here that again and again one finds people palliating German sins or excusing them by reference to the sins of Great Britain in the past. "You think we did wrong in Poland? Well, look what the English did in Egypt." That sort of argument makes impossible the meeting of minds. With such Germans one may talk for hours without hearing a moral or ethical or humane sentiment.

The number of sane people who justify the invasion of Poland on the ground that Poles are *ein minderwertiges Volk* (an inferior people) is astounding. Germans sincerely believe that the Poles committed horrible atrocities in the war; they cite the testimony of members of their family or friends who saw this horror or that. They are not aware that neutral observers here have accumulated much testimony on the other side. Alas, it is another case of the conflicting evidence, charges, and countercharges that arise in every war. War is made up of atrocities and is itself an atrocity from beginning to end. The Germans firmly believe, however, that their troops are the most kind-hearted and considerate of any, just as the English and French think the same of their armies.

As for life in Berlin, everybody remarks that you would not know a war was going on. There are no gas masks, no shelter trenches, and so few sandbags that they hardly attract attention. Many anti-aircraft guns are visible as one drives round the city, but one misses the balloons that so beautify the sky in London. I am told there are plenty in reserve here. There is sufficient food, though there is a shortage of fat, eggs, and meat, with two meatless days a week. Plenty of vegetables and fruit are to be had, as I found out when walking around a workers' quarter, though some of the things for sale here would not find buyers in America. In the main the allotments are adequate, except that there is not enough bread for those who spend a day at hard labor. The rationing is so well done here in Berlin—I cannot vouch for conditions elsewhere—that the original fault-finding has largely subsided. One can accustom oneself to almost anything. Automobiles are comparatively scarce, and at night getting about is extremely difficult because of the blackout; but people are always ready to help you to find the underground station or the trolley or bus line you are searching for.

All in all, the picture I get of Germany is one of tremendous, yes, dangerous strength, of power organized with great efficiency for the purpose in hand. The industrial development in the past few years has been most remarkable. Berlin is being torn down and rebuilt, and there is no question that the Nazis deserve credit for beautifying the city. If their tremendous organizing talent, force, and driving power were only devoted to humane, altruistic, and peaceful ends, they would go far indeed. The reservoir of man-power seems nothing less than extraordinary. There are supposed to be between two and one-half and three million men under arms in the west alone, to say nothing of the troops in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and other conquered territories; yet one sees countless young men of military age still in civilian clothes. Finally, one comes back every hour of the day to the question of how in the world Germany can finance all this. I have not succeeded in getting an adequate answer.

And still I maintain that the German people want nothing so much as peace.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Whoa to You, Professor

WOE UNTO YOU, LAWYERS! By Fred Rodell. Reynal and Hitchcock. $2.50.

IT MUST be a great pleasure to sit in one of Professor Rodell's classes at Yale Law School. Applied to concrete problems in the law, his distaste for legal flummery no doubt acts as a cathartic on the budding barrister. The purpose of his book is to plant "at the least a seed of skepticism about the whole legal profession" in the mind of the average man, but it is soon apparent that Professor Rodell does his planting with a hatchet. He calls the lawyers "medicine men," engaged in "a high-class racket," "modern purveyors of streamlined voodoo and chromium-plated theology." The Law—he always capitalizes the word—"is a hoax, a balloon, a lot of empty words," "wholesale flimflam." "The whole pseudo-science of The Law, regardless of its results, is a fraud." I sympathize with Professor Rodell's irritation, but the scream is not literature.

When Professor Rodell in The Law and the Lady burlesques the processes of legal reasoning by applying them to the problem of getting up in the morning, he is amusing. Between bursts of fury he can be concise and illuminating, as when he says that what one learns in law school is "the technique of using a new language." Holmes certainly shared the feelings Professor Rodell expresses, but it is when the latter comes to paraphrase Holmes that the gap between him and his master is embarrassingly clear. Holmes's "The common law is not a brooding omnipresence in the sky" means, according to Rodell, that "it is a big balloon, which has so far escaped the lethal pin." Rodell's version of the classic "General propositions do not decide concrete cases" is that we must "dismiss the abstract principles of The Law as being no more, in reality, than high-sounding combinations of words." One could as adequately paraphrase Walter Pater by saying that he thought the Mona Lisa cute. General propositions do not decide concrete cases, but to conclude that general propositions are useless is not only nihilism, it is nonsense.

Popular feeling against lawyers is not hard to understand. It finds expression at least as far back as Jack Cade's rebellion in the fifteenth century. In the second part of "Henry VI" Shakespeare has Cade say, "All the realm shall be in common," and Dick the Butcher cries from the mob, "The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers." Lawyers were unpopular then as now because they twisted the law for the benefit of the rich and powerful. In the process of arranging that to him who hath shall be given, they acquired peculiar occupational ways and a language of their own that now afflicts the radical as well as the conservative practitioner. A sacred language was required to evoke awe and command obedience. Obscurity became a vested interest; if laymen could read the law for themselves, they would need no lawyers. It was also necessary to adopt a language and a method that would hide rather than reveal the real basis of decision.

The law appeals to respect for the traditional. Its new wine must be hidden in old bottles. But, Rodell to the contrary, lawyers are not in every sense conservative; the history of contemporary trust and corporation devices is evidence of their ability to be ingenious, inventive, and pioneering when there is a market for these qualities. The barnacles of precedent encrust the law, and the bumbling of many of its practitioners disgraces it; reform of the law and the debunking of lawyers are desirable. Lawyers play entirely too commanding a role in American government and politics, a point on which de Tocqueville throws much more light than Rodell. But the latter's conclusions do not seem the product of ripe reflection. "The answer," Rodell writes, "is to get rid of the lawyers and throw the law with a capital L out of our system of laws . . . do away entirely with both the magicians and their magic and run our civilization according to practical and comprehensible rules, dedicated to non-legal justice, to common-or-garden fairness that the ordinary man can understand." This begs an appalling number of questions. Professor Rodell has courage, but does not seem to make a fetish of precision. A minor example is a statement that the reviewer —in fairness to the bar of New York—must correct. Professor Rodell says, "Most New York lawyers spend most of their time working out legal advice for the business titans that make their financial headquarters in the city." Most New York lawyers merely wish they could.

I. F. STONE

Jack London

JACK LONDON AND HIS TIMES. By Joan London. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $3.

JOAN LONDON disappointed her father by not being a son and was, in her turn, disappointed by his leaving her mother. He once courted her love with bitter accusations and, again, by desiring her to rely on him as a rock always and in any extremity. But a few days later he was dead, the victim, at best, of his own heedlessness and soul-sickness. He was only forty. That was twenty-three years ago. Joan London knew no real intimacy with her cyclonic father. Of her personal difficulties, detailed in Irving Stone's book, one finds no betrayal in hers, but her attitude is one of resolute appraisal rather than of filial indulgence.

The point that elicits her keenest sympathy is Jack London's socialism, which, however, was muddle-headed and insufficient. Yet it was too much for H. L. Mencken, an enlightened editor of a period later than London's rise; he called it a "cook-tent materialism," for by his aesthetic gospel "one daffodil is worth ten shares of Bethlehem Steel." Miss London prefers to balance one Trotsky against several Stalins. From the Lenin-Trotsky axis, she quotes with pride Trotsky's praise of "The Iron Heel."

Jack London she rates four to seven against George

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Speed, who, content with a modest living, yet discharged domestic obligations, made no compromises, and was indefatigable as a labor lawyer till his death at seventy. But a romancer, on pain of being disbarred by a commercial-minded supreme court of editors, has to be "the tops" or a very promising contender. I suggest, as a more fruitful contrast, E. A. Robinson; for, whether or not his retreat from life and ascetic mendicancy impoverished his art, John Barleycorn was his, no less than London's, dark angel. London stormed, not Parnassus, but the escarpments of Mammon, and the scale on which the effort laid waste his powers is perhaps his greatest indictment of our less than cook-tent materialism. Failure would have hamstrung him, but the price of success was a more and more exclusive encompassment in the arid social desert of persons whose help he needed or who needed his help till he came to a final isolation reminiscent of Lear or Timon. That tragedy is missed alike by the broadly colored Irving Stone and the scalpel-wielding Joan London.

All praise to the scalpel, however, for what it can uncover! Joan London's treatment of the "times," too close to being mere historical and critical réchauffé, is redeemed by her special emphasis on West Coast events and personalities; and her industry and shrewd insight appear in such passages as her demonstration that, more than by Darwin or Nietzsche, London was encouraged in his glorification of force and his proto-Aryanism by a now obscure second-rater, Benjamin Kidd. After all, it is fascinating to learn by what blending of ideals and self-hypnotism Jack London's phenomenal energy was sustained in his unequal twenty-year struggle.

ROBERTS TAPLEY

Anatomy of Diplomacy

DIPLOMACY. By Harold Nicolson, Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

WHAT the Romans said of the poets—that they are "born and not made"—equally applies to all artists regardless of their vocation. Whoever has read any of Harold Nicolson's books is bound to admit that their author not only tops the highest standard of European education, but is a born *homme de lettres* of the most refined type. If such a thing as an inherited competence to treat a special subject really exists, no one is better equipped to write on diplomacy than the son of Lord Carnock, whom both a brilliant brain and a tender heart made the most shining star in the galaxy of pre-war British diplomacy, and the nephew of Lord Dufferin, whose tragedy Nicolson himself has so masterfully recorded in his "Helen's Tower."

Subconsciously the author was probably influenced by his father's image when he listed the seven virtues of the ideal diplomat—truthfulness, precision, calm, patience, perseverance, modesty, loyalty—and still more so in holding the opinion that the best diplomats are the reasonable and humane skeptics. Sir Henry Wotton's current banter that "an ambassador is a gentleman sent abroad to lie for the good of his country" never was seriously meant, and "classic diplomatic theory" may repudiate the telling of a deliberate falsehood, but diplomatic practice was not always so austerely disposed. Talleyrand, a most successful diplomat under three French regimes, held that words were made to conceal our thoughts, and the Russian ambassador in Stamboul was once very proud of his nickname, *menteur pacha.* These are, of course, old stories, but Nicolson's criticism of Count Szilassy's view—who, by the way, is no count, but a baron—that it may be "patriotic" to disregard truth, has not been exactly confirmed by recent developments in European diplomacy.

Already in his "Peacemaking" Nicolson warned us that the transition from the old diplomacy to the new "is less a question of ethics than a question of methods," and now we are told that the transition merely means a gradual adjustment of the art of negotiation to changes in political conditions. In a chapter captioned Democratic Diplomacy, the conclusion is that "democratic diplomacy has not as yet discovered its own formula," but in view of Munich and its outcome would it not be more exact to say that democratic diplomacy has not as yet discovered its own existence?

Discriminating between various types of European diplomacy, the author contrasts the British type, "which is most conducive to the maintenance of peaceful relations," with the German "warrior or military conception." This shows that Nicolson, although he left the diplomatic service years ago, still writes the polite language of diplomats; if he did not, instead of calling the Austrian type "sudden" he would have referred to the familiar French adage, *"bête comme un diplomate autrichien,"* and would have expressed his doubt whether it is admissible to mistake the armed blackmail of Nazi envoys for diplomatic negotiations. It is, however, not merely politeness or flattery when he is full of praise for the professional American diplomacy, which in spite of unfortunate political appointments à la "Leave It to Me" will "rapidly become among the best in the world."

Although the author does not explicitly say so, developments in other countries are less promising. According to a medieval theory the angels, the messengers between earth and heaven, were the first diplomats, whereas in the Greek legend Hermes, the patron of thieves, was the first envoy employed by Zeus. It looks as if more recently the Greek tradition had prevailed.

Nicolson's work as a textbook on the science and art of diplomacy is particularly adequate to improve, at least in theory, the efficiency of negotiations which just now are rather a complement to the armed forces of the belligerents. And this textbook is once more evidence of the truth that no such thing as dull science exists. It makes delightful reading. There are only a few scholars who are bores.

RUSTEM VAMBERY

Trilogy of Trilogies

MASTER BUILDERS: A TYPOLOGY OF THE SPIRIT. By Stefan Zweig. The Viking Press. $3.75.

UNDER the not wholly appropriate title "Master Builders" are comprised three books, two of which have been previously published in English in reverse order to their German publication. Written during a period of twenty-five years as parts of a single plan, the first and most lasting impression they make when thus brought together is one of inordinate length and inflation.

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> The first series [explains the Author's Note] "Three Masters," . . . was intended to depict in the life and work of three writers of different nationality—Balzac, Dickens, and Dostoevski—the type of world-portraying novelist; the third series, "Adepts in Self-Portraiture," . . . treated of the self-portraitists, the masters of autobiography, in the persons of Casanova, Stendhal, and Tolstoy. Between these books came "The Struggle with the Daimon," . . . in which I sought to describe, in Hölderlin, Kleist, and Nietzsche—as opposed to Goethe, the genius of self-preservation—the type of the self-destructive poet whose "daimon" at once drags him aloft and thrusts him down into the inner abyss.

The effort to dissipate the strain of fitting this odd assortment into the pattern increases Mr. Zweig's wordiness. He is most successful in his exposition of Balzac and Stendhal. Their French solidity and precision, like cheerfulness with Dr. Johnson, keep breaking through; and they are the most easily understood from the point of view of the present. In spite of Mr. Zweig's appreciation of Dickens, he does not seem to understand the English and very much oversimplifies the Victorian Era. The Russians and the Germans he has chosen lend themselves far too readily to dithyrambic interpretation.

Mr. Zweig's book is neither one line of continuous progression nor is it a series of parallels. The final apotheosis of Tolstoy, who assimilates much of Dostoevski and Nietzsche, and much of Goethe as well, perhaps shows that the author intended it to be both. He is at his best when he is sketching a biography or a portrait, especially in a masterly biography of Stendhal in thirty pages catchily entitled Film of His Life. He is at his worst when apostrophizing life at length or personifying solitude and imagining "her" roaming with Nietzsche (meaning he traveled alone). In another place he can ask the same simple—or rather rhetorical—question in seven different ways, or repeat a one-page description in almost the same words for six. Rhapsodical variation on a theme produces a feeling of word-weariness even in small doses; when this trilogy of trilogies is read as one book, economy is felt to be urgent.

The lively translation of Eden and Cedar Paul can hardly be found fault with, but the words "poesy" and "joyance" sound high-flown even in Mr. Zweig's high flights.

The most memorable section of the book is that on Dostoevski. It provides also a passage of great topical interest:

> During the Great War we could not but feel that we owed all our knowledge of Russia to Dostoevski; and it is he whom we Germans have to thank because, in spite of the fact that Russia was an enemy country, we could feel that it was the brotherland of the soul.

There is another in the section on Tolstoy:

> We refuse to surrender the acquirements of our reasoning faculties and our technique; to abandon the heritage of our Western civilization; to make a bonfire of our books, our pictures, our cities, and our science.... Finally, we will not listen to this gospel because Tolstoy, though he has driven the plowshare of his criticism more deeply than any other into the soil of our time, has not enriched that soil with a single grain of seed destined to bear fruit in our European future—being herein typically Russian, the embodiment of the spirit of his race and his generation.

This is a long book, not well thought out, but with food for thought.

JAMES ORRICK

Recent Fiction

"MADE IN U. S. A." By Hans Otto Storm. Longmans, Green and Company. $2.50.

A welcome variation from today's slough of three-part sagas, this book aims at one definite point in space and time, one mood, and it hits its mark smack in the center. The obsolescent ocean liner India, belonging to a penny-pinching company that operates it as a cheap world-cruise ship and also surreptitiously as a cargo vessel, runs aground on an uncharted mud shoal in the Pacific. Its neurotic captain, for reasons of his own, refuses to radio for help, tries desperately to float the ship by dumping overboard his cargo of old street-car rails and baled hay. Though the situation never becomes acutely dangerous, tension among passengers and crew gradually heightens until it blossoms into one of the strangest mutinies ever recorded in sea fiction. At once grim and farcical, the impasse lends itself peculiarly to Mr. Storm's gift for irony, one striking example of which is the remark of a nice old lady as she watches the crew dumping steel rails into the ocean—rails consigned to Japan, where they were to have been cut up into six-inch lengths, heated white-hot with chemicals, and scattered by means of bombs into apartment houses. " 'What a pity,' said the nice old lady, watching them go into the sea. 'What a criminal waste.' "

BROAD IS THE WAY. By Emerson Waldman. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

A hard-hitting, tightly constructed novel, pursuing the fortunes of the Gabrielson family whom the author brought from Russia to Mississippi in "The Land Is Large." Joseph Gabrielson, gnawed by the lust for money and political power and endowed with preternatural shrewdness, uses friendship, family ties, racial solidarity as long as they serve his purpose, and when they conflict with his interests he tramples them underfoot. He even supports the Klan organization in the hope that it will abet his burning ambition to become Governor of Mississippi. Financially, he succeeds beyond his wildest hopes, but like John Selby's Sam he tastes only dust and ashes in the midst of wealth, having sacrificed wife, child, and friends to his insatiable greed. But Joseph Gabrielson is a broader, more complex person than Sam, and you will find him harder to forget.

RED STRANGERS. By Elspeth Huxley. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

Sugar-coating the ethnological pill, Mrs. Huxley novelizes the life, traditions, customs of three generations of the South African Kikuyu tribe. She shows them first in their pre-Boer War simplicity, hedged in by superstitious fears as thick as soldier ants but enjoying a primitive, highly effective system of tribal justice; then comes their first contact with the white man (the "red stranger"), their initiation into his mechanical and often underhanded civilization; and finally we see their absorption into an empire, with the new generation of natives turning their steps more and more in the paths of the strangers, yet preserving many of the deep-rooted prejudices and taboos of their grandfathers.

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THE DELECTABLE COUNTRY. By Leland D. Baldwin. Lee Furman. $2.75.

The writer of several notable non-fiction books about the early frontier turns his knowledge to account in painting the background for a 700-page, action-filled novel starting with the Whiskey Rebellion days in western Pennsylvania. Dave Braddee, a keelboatman and a friend of the redoubtable Mike Fink, alternately batters his enemies in gouge-fights and invites his soul with legal and spiritual studies, always driven on by an internal restlessness and, of course, the attraction of two women, one of whom rules his mind and the other his body. The scene ranges from Pittsburgh to New Orleans, and wherever Dave is, things happen. A good, solid addition to the historical-fiction shelf.

RESTLESS IS THE RIVER. By August Derleth. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

A saga of the 1840's in Wisconsin. Count Brogmar, a Hungarian liberal forced to flee from Metternich's tyranny, makes a home for himself in the wilderness, earns the love and respect of his fellow-citizens, and grows passionately fond of the hearty, free land, though his wife goes mad with longing for the Old World and finally kills herself. The author, as in his earlier "Wind Over Wisconsin," reveals painstaking study of the history of his native state, and peoples it with convincing, unmelodramatic men and women.

BOSS MAN. By Louis Cochran. The Caxton Printers. $2.50.

Pathos and violence in the Delta country. A brief but vivid picture of a rich, crabbed landlord who has the courage of his cussedness, cheats his tenants in the good years, and sees them through the bad ones. Frustrated in his hopes for a son, he vents his bitterness on tenants and fellow-townsmen, but in the end shows unexpected generosity toward a hate-maddened rival.

LOUIS B. SALOMON

DRAMA

Class Day

THOUGH Robert Ardrey is still a very young man he is the author of several produced plays of the sort inevitably described as "promising." He has, in addition, a certain unmistakable gift for the theater not always implied when that adjective is bestowed as a dubious accolade. In view, however, of both his experience and his talent it is rather difficult to condone so thoroughly callow a play as that which the Group has just produced at the Mansfield Theater. "Thunder Rock" is embarrassingly young in its earnestness, in its enthusiasm, and above all in the hollow ring of its convictions.

Mr. Ardrey believes, like the majority of his compatriots, that in times as trying as these, sincere and sensitive men are in grave danger of giving up in despair. He is further convinced that despair is, nevertheless, an undesirable state of mind, and that it would be much better if we would all gird our loins instead for the battle which we may lose but which is, at least, not lost as yet. His problem is to embody this thesis in a play which will somehow reinforce it, but this problem he fails signally to solve. He begins by inventing a hero whom it will be necessary to convince and into whose mouth he can put all the arguments to be demolished, but one knows from the very opening passages of the debate that the straw man will collapse, and the play becomes essentially a series of elaborated devices whose chief purpose is to postpone until 10:45 the inevitable moment when this hero will arise to proclaim the only thing which the author has ever had on his mind to say.

Mr. Ardrey has, to be sure, gone to great lengths in his effort to kill time as pretentiously as possible. His escapist, convinced that the only future for mankind is its past, retires to a lonely lighthouse and by the power of his imagination brings to life certain immigrants of the past century who lived, so he imagines, in more spacious times, when men still believed in a solution to their problems. But he discovers that they also had their moments of despair, and from them he learns that the very things of which they had given up hope were actually just around the corner. The physician did not know that ether was about to be discovered; the disillusioned feminist did not know that long before 1939 women would actually be sitting in the House of Commons. Obviously it is unwise to sell humanity short.

One may pass over the fact that the argument seems to point both ways. If humanity got what it wanted, what it wanted doesn't seem to have brought it much satisfaction or, perhaps, much profit. But more important for the artistic effect of the play is the fact that after anything so pretentious as ghosts called from the grave one has a right to expect something more than the grandiloquent pep-talk which one gets at the end of the play. It sounds for all the world like Class Day, and the hero, theoretically a journalist toughened by international adventures, stands revealed as only a valedictorian facing the world with all the fine gestures expected of him. The thesis play looks easy to those who would write it. To be "important" or "significant" one need only choose a "significant" or "important" topic. But an air of fatuity is inevitable unless the play itself reinforces the thesis either intellectually or emotionally, and Mr. Ardrey neither achieves any special poignancy nor says anything which a dozen editorials have not said just as well and in a great deal less time.

If the Group had any doubts about the play it has concealed them under one of its most conscientious productions. The single set representing the interior of the lighthouse was designed by Mordecai Gorelik and is beautifully as well as solidly realistic. The company, which includes some of the Group's best actors, plays with a sincerity and intelligence capable of interpreting a good deal more than there is here to interpret. But the final effect is to make one wonder that so immature a work could be taken with such artistic seriousness, and there is a moment just at the end when, unless my fancy deceived me, Luther Adler lost his struggle to believe in the character he is portraying. He is supposed to stand with his hand on his typewriter, to proclaim his conviction that America should stay out of the war, and to imply that with his little portable he now feels quite capable of slaying the dragon. Even writers will admit that there is something

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inescapably absurd about the effort to make a smashing dramatic climax out of a writer getting ready to write, and Mr. Adler faltered once in the midst of his ringing speech. It was, I think, a sort of vocal blush.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

The main conclusion the observer carries away from "Margin for Error" (Plymouth Theater) is that Clare Boothe, the *femme terrible* of Broadway, should stick to domestic affairs. "The Women" showed that she is competent to speak of that variety of human beings known as cats. Her foray against the Nazis by way of a "satirical melodrama" is so crude both as foray and as satire—the jokes and the characterization are so bad and broad—that one is embarrassed for democracy; and it is not even good melodrama, for there are moments in the short play as long as those we have all spent in the subway when the current is turned off. As for the acting and direction, one may admit that the play presented insuperable obstacles.

M. M.

FILMS

YOU have surely read what a wonderful picture "Ninotchka" (MGM) is—smart, witty, mature, satirical, timely, presented with the famous "Lubitsch touch" and in addition with something entirely new—Greta Garbo as the screen's funniest comedienne. I admit that this piling up of adjectives prejudiced me against the film. Yet I think genuine disillusionment was the cause of my disappointment when the show was over. I had laughed at witty lines, been pleasantly entertained by Lubitsch tricks (his method of implying more than he says gives the moviegoer the joy of co-creation), and—purest experience—admired Greta Garbo. But I was annoyed by the whole and still am.

The theme of the picture is as old as any—the corruptibility of human nature by the good things of life. This time members of the Russian bureaucracy are put to the test. They come to Paris with a trunkful of jewels belonging to a former archduchess which they wish to sell because the Red Fatherland needs foreign exchange to buy tractors. Instead of being efficient, the commissars fall for the charm of Paris and the pleasures the capitalist world offers to its wealthy children. Greta Garbo is sent after the scoundrels but only for a short time does a better job than they. Soon she falls in love, buys a hat, gets drunk, too, and loses the jewels. But she quickly recovers them. The Archduchess loves the same man, and in exchange for him Commissar Ninotchka's political career is saved and her honor restored. This turn of the script is especially clumsy. No man, and surely not this pair of creased trousers (Melvyn Douglas, truly elegant), would be worth such a fortune to a woman. The end, of course, is a happy one for the lovers.

The details of this thin and rather stupid story are better than the whole. This column has generally no quarrel with scene-to-scene entertainment, serving a legitimate demand for relaxation, though it adds up to nothing. But the entertaining gags of this picture add up to something, and it is not pleasant. They assume an air of satire, thus pretending to a higher function and introducing a serious element. But satire needs more than the spirit of the entertainer. It requires a suitable target, which has to be hit. And satire demands sharp truthfulness. What Lubitsch and his scribblers do, besides providing laughter and shocks, is to ridicule higher aspiration and efforts. Perhaps they did not intend to, but they say to their audience: Wine (pardon, champagne), a little love-making, silk nightgowns, and top hats are what human beings want after all. Why try for more?

The millions who will see this picture and be impressed by its technical expertness and sophistication will at the same time be effectively taught that Communists are "low" people. The substitution of the vices of the Stalin bureaucracy for the virtues of the revolutionaries of yesterday and tomorrow is a trick that is being more and more generally practiced. That the untidy and unshaven Russian commissars of the picture never existed in reality—Stalin always gave his traders enough money to "represent" lavishly—is a minor point ignored by a script which is manufactured and in not one scene really felt.

As for the comedienne Greta Garbo, well, she is no comedienne. She is an exciting personality, a character, a great actress—but it is not she who makes one laugh but the contrast in the picture between her and everything else. Each "funny" scene she plays here could also be fitted into one of her tragic parts and would not be funny at all in another context. But as long as Garbo is on the screen one does not care why she is there.

I could write much more about "Ninotchka"—its mixture of style, its unevenly written scenes, its opportunism, and its cynicism. But sparkling as is its champagne, I prefer the clear water of a picture like "Harvest" or the true exposure of human folly in "The End of a Day."

FRANZ HOELLERING

MUSIC

THE Primrose Quartet, which made its first public appearance at a recent New Friends of Music concert, is broadcasting a Beethoven cycle from WEAF on alternate Sunday evenings; and on November 12 I managed to hear Opus 18 No. 6, which the Budapest Quartet had played the Sunday before at the Frick Museum. The two groups are alike in the brilliance of their performances—the brilliance of consummate technique and musicianship operating at incandescence. But in the Budapest performance the brilliance is mellowed, whereas the Primrose performance is swifter-paced, more sharply accented and contoured; and the difference, I think, is one not so much of age as of temperament: the Budapest Quartet is a group of exceptionally fine players, the Primrose a group of virtuosos. That is, even apart from Primrose himself, it has in the violinists Oscar Shumsky and Joseph Gingold two players of concert caliber whom one does not normally find in quartets, and who not only have acquired the ensemble discipline that such players normally find it

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difficult to acquire, but have retained something of the temperament that contributed to making them two of the outstanding younger concert artists a few years ago.

The members of the Primrose Quartet are in the N. B. C. Symphony Orchestra; and Shumsky and Gingold are in that unusual violin section in which one finds a number of the young players who were attempting to make concert careers until recently. It makes for a superb violin section, but it is a waste of talent; and nothing in our society is worse, nothing productive of crueler misery, than the perversion of the essential purpose of concert activity—which is to have music played and heard—by the huge management racket into a traffic in short-lived publicity values that corrupts the public and starves all but a few of the artists. On the other hand there may have been little in what has been happening in the Soviet Union in recent years to feel happy about as one did about so much in the first years; but one thing that remains to rejoice in is the way young pianists and violinists are cared for while they study and are given audiences when they are ready to play in public. And if the young pianist has to pay for his security with the customary verbal genuflections in the direction of "our wise and noble Leader," here he has to pay for his starvation with flattery of the concert manager's conception of himself as a wise and noble patron of music and a benefactor to public and artist alike.

Not every orchestra can have a violin section composed of concert violinists; but at the very least one would expect the Philharmonic-Symphony's concertmaster to have something better to show than Mr. Piastro's slovenly phrasing and intonation as he led his associates of the Philharmonic-Symphony Quartet and assisting players in some of the worst performances of one of the worst programs the New Friends of Music has been responsible for.

One of the works on this program was Beethoven's String Trio Opus 9, No. 1, of which the Pasquiers' Columbia set (M-384, $5) has not yet reached me. spite of their inferior recording I have preferred Weingartner's performance of Brahms's First Symphony on Columbia and Klemperer's on Decca, because their simple, direct treatment of this emotionally inflated work at least did not exaggerate its pretentiousness; and now Weingartner has made a fine new recording of his performance with the London Symphony (M-383, $7.50). In Book II of Debussy's Preludes there is the same play with the sonorities of the piano and with stylistic formulas and mannerisms as in Book I, with even less in musical results; and the sole value of Gieseking's set (M-382, $6) is again in his marvelously subtle and precise performances. Liszt's songs, as sung by Ernst Wolff (X-148, $3.50); the Busoni Sonatina well recorded by Egon Petri (69736-D. $1.50); Carrillo's "Preludio a Cristobal Colon," written in quarter-, eighth-, and sixteenth-tones (7357-M, $1.25)—these, for different reasons, I do not find interesting. But Vaughan Williams's Fantasia on the English folksong "Greensleeves," well recorded by the Jacqures Orchestra (69735-D, $1.50), is enjoyable, as is Foulds's "Keltic Lament" on the reverse side.

The Basie Orchestra's "Song of the Islands" (Vocalion 5169) offers good work by Clayton on muted trumpet and Basie himself on piano, with objectionable interruptions by the full band; and in "Dickie's Dream" (Vocalion 5118) there is, in addition to Basie's playing, a good solo by Young on tenor saxophone. As for Benny Goodman, Jack Teagarden, Gene Krupa, Teddy Wilson—they were the outstanding musicians in the groups that made the Goodman records of 1933-34, and now they lead their own large bands and produce rubbish. I can understand the satisfaction a man would get from the consciousness of having been responsible for those Goodman records; but what satisfaction there can be in the consciousness of having pulled some of the wires that moved Goodman from his records of 1934 to his records of today, I cannot imagine.

B. H. HAGGIN

A Selected List of Children's Books

BY LENA BARKSDALE

PICTURE BOOKS

Hoo. Hoo! De Witt! By Frances Duncombe. Illustrations by Jean Lamont. Holt. $1.25. A baby owl goes exploring.

Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel. By Virginia Lee Burton. Houghton Mifflin. $1.50. How Mike and his steam shovel, Mary Anne, found a new job.

Little Toot. By Hardie Gramatky. Putnam. $1.50. A mischievous tugboat becomes a hero.

Faraway Meadow. By Thomas Handforth. Doubleday, Doran. $2. Nonsense story of wild animals with pictures to match.

Madeline. By Ludwig Bemelmans. Simon and Schuster. $2. Hilarious tale of a small boarder in a Paris school.

Black, Bay, and Chestnut: Profiles of Twenty Favorite Horses. By C. W. Anderson. Macmillan. $2.50. Lovely full-page drawings of famous racehorses in action with brief explanatory text.

I Am a Pueblo Indian Girl. By E-Yen-Shuré (Blue Corn). Illustrated by Indian Artists. Morrow. $1.50. An Indian girl tells of her country and her daily life. Pictures of unusual distinction in full color.

The Little Mermaid. By Hans Christian Andersen. Illustrated by Dorothy Lathrop. Macmillan. $2.50. Exquisite full-page pictures in color and many drawings in black and white.

TALES OF FANCY AND FACT

The World Is Round. By Gertrude Stein. Illustrated by Clement Hurd. Scott. $2.50. A subtle understanding of the extravagant imaginings of childhood underlies this remarkable book.

Pilgrim's Progress. By John Bunyan. Illustrated by Robert Lawson. Stokes. $2. This wisely abridged version is full of adventure and sharpened in beauty by the artist's brilliant drawings.

Terence O'Hara. By Thomas Burns. Illustrated by Reginald Birch. Harcourt, Brace. $2. A true fairy tale that sparkles with Irish wit and gaiety.

The Youngest Camel. By Kay Boyle. Illustrated by Fritz Kredel. Little, Brown. $2. Beauty and perception are the essence of this desert fantasy.

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Skippack School. By Marguerite de Angeli. Doubleday, Doran. $2. About a young settler in Penn's Woods, his woodcarving and his school days.

Quetzal Quest. By V. Wolfgang von Hagen and Quail Hawkins. Illustrated by Antonio Sotomayer. Harcourt, Brace. $2. A scientist's search for a rare bird in the jungles of Honduras brought brave adventure and excitement to an Indian boy.

Top of the World. By Alice Gall and Fleming Crew. Oxford University. $1.50. Stories of hunters and the hunted in Greenland.

Mouseknees. By William C. White. Illustrated by Avery Johnson. Random House. $1.75. Amusing escapades of a small native of Tobasco.

Fafan in China. By Joe Lederer. Holiday House. $2. A Swiss boy in Shanghai with his Chinese companions solves a mystery and effects a rescue. Spontaneous and entertaining.

Fair Play. By Munro Leaf. Stokes. $1.50. Common-sense explanation of rules of conduct in work and play.

Here Is a Book. By Marshall McClintock. Illustrated with photographs and with drawings by Ninon MacKnight. Vanguard. $2. Part I explains clearly how a book—"Scoop"—is edited, printed, manufactured, and sold. Part II is "Scoop" itself, a lively story with many drawings.

The Chisel Tooth Tribe. By Wilfred S. Bronson. Harcourt, Brace. $2. Lively text, amusing pictures, and scientific accuracy make this book a stimulating incentive to nature study.

FOR THE TEN-YEAR-OLD

Francie on the Run. By Hilda von Stockum. Viking. $2. Delightful tale of an enterprising little boy who, inadvertently, traveled extensively through Ireland.

Reginald Birch—His Book. Edited by Elisabeth B. Hamilton. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50. Varied collection of stories and poems illustrated in the course of the long life of an honored artist.

All Over Town. By Carol Ryrie Brink. Macmillan. $2. Merry story of the pranks and real achievements of two boys and a girl.

Paula. By Marguerite Vance. Dodd, Mead. $2 A friendly little American girl among immigrant neighbors.

Saranga the Pigmy. By Attilio Gatti. Scribner. $2. Dramatic story of a boy, a dog, and a very old elephant in the deep jungles of Africa.

Round the Mulberry Hill. By Alison Braigrie Alessios. Longmans, Green. $1.50. Pleasant story of a little girl who finds simple country things exciting.

Boy with a Pack. By Stephen Meader. Harcourt, Brace. $2. A New England boy peddler meets with stirring adventures as he journeys to the Ohio settlements.

The Mystery of Dog Flip. Translated from the French of Thérèse Lenôtre. Stokes. $1.75. Droll story of an old man and a boy who chased a stolen dog through Europe to India.

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THEATER

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Letters to the Editors

Servile, Not Subversive

Dear Sirs: I agree with you that the League for Peace and Democracy advocates many things that anybody may advocate without shame, and that Dies is a menace to the civil liberties of the people. The injustice of his action in revealing the list of government employees in Washington on the league's mailing list is apparent to me, for I am in all probability on its list and also on that of the German consulate in New York, the I. L. D., the Civil Liberties Union, the Socialist Party, the Communist Party, and other groups to which I have written asking for information. At present I belong only to the Civil Liberties Union.

I joined the League for Peace and Democracy in April, 1938, and dropped out a few months ago. I am convinced from a study of my own branch and contacts with other members that Communists controlled the League, but there was nothing subversive about their activities. My main objection to them was based on their blind devotion to both Stalin and Browder, which was carried to the point where it became degrading servility. They would denounce Mayor Hague for his repressions, but they would also knock down a follower of Trotsky for no other crime than drinking a toast to him.

Your stand on Communist Party finances is rather puzzling. Before the recent revelations you seemed to think that the party was no longer subsidized. To those who studied the problem it was evident that it was. Does it not occur to you that if the progressives do not ferret out these facts the reactionaries will? I cannot emphasize this too strongly. It is deplorable that the facts must be revealed by such a man as Dies. Will not the public think that those who ridiculed the stories of the large Communist funds are now somewhat discredited?

Civil liberties, however, are another matter. Even if the Communists said a lot worse things than they do now they should not be suppressed or driven out of unions. But there is no reason to trust them for elective positions in unions or in public life, and this should apply to Michael Quill and others like him.

I cannot help thinking that you do not press forward on these lines for fear that you will be called a red-baiter.

JOHN L. STRYKER

Madison, N. J., November 13

How Russia "Stopped" Hitler

Dear Sirs: I was somewhat amused by the letter from Ruth Epperson Kennell about how "Russia stopped Hitler," in *The Nation* of November 4.

According to the letters exchanged beween Molotov and von Ribbentrop regarding the economic pact between Hitler and Stalin, Russia agrees to furnish Germany with raw materials to be paid for in manufactured goods to be delivered by Germany over an extended period of time. In capitalist phraseology, this means that Russia extends Germany credit with which to buy raw materials, and will therefore have an increasing stake in the survival and success of Hitler in this war. Even if Stalin intends another double cross, the agreement has helped to bolster German morale and keep the German people behind Hitler in what they must have come to believe is likely to be a pretty long war.

Meanwhile, Russia and the Communists throughout the world are playing Hitler's diplomatic game by pressing for a peace based on the present military situation, which is of course a smashing victory for Hitler.

Far from stopping Hitler, Stalin, by making the agreement to give him economic aid, is helping Hitler, and in proportion as he carries out his agreement will actually be giving Hitler the substantial aid necessary to enable him to keep on fighting and retain the loyalty of the German people.

ALFRED BAKER LEWIS

Boston, November 15

Why Pick on Stalin?

Dear Sirs: In the impromptu debate on the Soviet Union and its policies between Mr. Villard on his page and Ruth Epperson Kennell in her letter in the November 4 issue, the honors go to Mrs. Kennell.

Mr. Villard's viewpoint is that of the man in the street, submerged in the propaganda flood. Mrs. Kennell has kept her head above the flood. My hat is off to her for her magnificent letter.

It is rather curious, and a commentary on the effectiveness of anti-Soviet propaganda, that when Hitler, the head and front of the anti-Comintern bloc, signs a pact with Stalin and leaves his pals in Rome and Tokyo holding the bag, it is Stalin and not Hitler who is called a double-crosser and other choice epithets. Why pick on Stalin?

SAMUEL BUCK

New York, November 12

On Schack's "Eilshemius"

Dear Sirs: Miss Rourke's extensive book review in your issue of November 11 is a stimulating and on the whole sound survey of the present state of American art. There is, however, one point over which I should like to take issue with her—her estimate of William Schack's book on Eilshemius. The tone of the book, she says, is facetious; nothing could be farther from the mark—unless the attempt to portray a whole man, the faults as well as the virtues, with humane and sympathetic detachment, is facetious. Mr. Shack has done a sensitive and skilful job of reporting, assembled all the facts and documents, and let Eilshemius speak for himself.

The point of the book, as I see it, is that there were certain social climates in America in the nineties and early nineteen hundreds that were not conducive to the creation of art. That Eilshemius cracked under the strain merely emphasizes the point. It is also one of the points in George Biddle's autobiography. Time and time again he demonstrates how little his early environment and education helped him to prepare for the career of artist to which he eventually devoted himself. Today, as Miss Rourke points out, there is an explosion of interest in art that is far from inhibiting the American artist, though there are always economic barriers for him to overcome.

Incidentally, credit should be given to Margit Varga, painter in her own right and member of the staff of *Life*, for her excellent biographical notes in "Modern American Painting," for which Peyton Boswell wrote only the preface.

CARL ZIGROSSER

New York, November 15

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Miss Rourke's Reply

Dear Sirs: I do not feel strongly in Mr. Shack's book the purpose to indict society for its failure to recognize Eilshemius, but since Mr. Zigrosser has raised the point I must state my belief that the charge cannot be proved conclusively. Eilshemius has faced no "economic barriers," he has always had enough to live on; he has had few if any responsibilities. A quirk of personality made the question of recognition a major one for him. I think we must notice that every artist—indeed, every individual—in some way confronts this problem. In Eilshemius the quirk deepened to a psychological rift. At least some of his failure to obtain what he wanted may have been due to the fact that, by one of those curious contradictions which occur in psychopathic cases, Eilshemius could not make those instinctive choices which might have set up a slender bridge between society and himself. This is not to defend society, but to suggest that the blanket indictment tends to darken our sense of the individual.

To give instances of what seem to me a lack of sympathy and a facetious tone in a long book would take far more space than is available here. Instead, let me quote what another critic has said of Mr. Shack, not in dispraise: "He has no fear of making his hero ridiculous. He literally undresses him, parades his intentions and feelings, his pretensions and subterfuges, his prides and rages, even his pettiness, for all to see" (Carl Van Vechten, *Herald Tribune Books,* November 12). I submit that exposure is not a sympathetic undertaking or a just approach to a psychopathic case.

It seems to me that Mr. Shack has erred in biographical method. Much of the vast amount of material at his disposal seems to have consisted of trivia that will not bear the weight of an elaborate treatment or the inflation of print. The material is conspicuously thin. It centers on the one narrow question, and its display at length was perhaps bound to make Eilshemius seem ridiculous, whatever Mr. Shack's intentions. If we could have had this in substance, not in long parade under the lights, we might have gained a genuine sense of tragedy or at least of pathos and human loss.

As my article was about to go to the printer I was obliged to take out a section of it because publication of one of the books had been postponed. In the subsequent readjustment a phrase inadvertently disappeared, one crediting Margit Varga with the lively and informative biographies that make more than half the text of Peyton Boswell's "Modern American Art" and provide much of the stimulus of the book. They deserve full recognition.

CONSTANCE ROURKE

Grand Rapids, Mich., November 16

The Case of Rebecca Shelley

Dear Sirs: On October 11, 1939, the United States Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati affirmed the decision of the Federal District Court in Detroit, Michigan, denying citizenship to Rebecca Shelley, a native-born American woman of colonial ancestry, who was technically expatriated by marriage to a German national a few weeks before the effective date (September 22, 1922) of the present law under which a woman retains her own citizenship at marriage irrespective of the nationality of her husband.

The Appellate Court rendered no opinion in the case, but narrowed the issue to the sole question of conscientious scruples against bearing arms in war, and issued a court order sustaining denial of citizenship on the authority of the Supreme Court decisions in the Schwimmer and Macintosh cases. The next legal step is to petition the Supreme Court to allow an appeal. For this money is needed immediately; $1,500 is a moderate estimate of the total amount necessary to carry the case through the Supreme Court.

The following statement from Miss Shelley sums up the case:

> This is sharply differentiated from the Schwimmer and Macintosh cases. As a native-born American the appellant petitions under a special law known as the Cable Act, designed to restore women expatriated by marriage absolutely and unqualifiedly to the constitutional status they enjoyed before marriage. She has the further advantage of being recommended to citizenship by the Department of Labor, while under previous Administrations the department denied citizenship to the pacifists concerned in the cases cited. . . .
>
> On January 31, 1938, the department reaffirmed this stand in response to a letter from the Detroit Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. Furthermore, referring to the Friends' petition that the question of bearing arms be eliminated from naturalization procedure, the Solicitor General of the department stated, "This department has been working in collaboration with the Department of State and the Department of Justice on the codification of the nationality laws which it is hoped may bring about the deletion of the phraseology about bearing arms about which your society complains."
>
> On the basis of such communications, as well as personal conferences with high officials of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Appellant believes that the department has taken every liberal step it well can, pending a Supreme Court decision on its action in recommending her to citizenship as a conscientious objector to war. She is equally confident that the majority of the present members of the Supreme Court will not punish an American woman's loyalty to conscience by stripping her of her birthright, and placing it in Hitler's hands.

Contributions may be sent to Mrs. Alberta Crabbe, Treasurer Rebecca Shelley Repatriation Committee, 109 Alexandrine Street, Detroit, Mich.

ALBERTA CRABBE, Treasurer, EMILY GREENE BALCH, Chairman, LEO M. FRANKLIN, HENRY HITT CRANE, KATHLEEN HENDRIE, NORMAN THOMAS, EDGAR DEWITT JONES.

Detroit, November 14

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